University of Alberta

Prairie Shamrock: Irish Settlement and Identity in Western Canada, 1870s – 1930s

by

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Abstract

This study analyzes Irish settlement and identity in the Prairie West from the opening of the region for agricultural settlement in the 1870s through to the early 1930s. Drawing upon census data, local histories and other sources, this thesis examines the relative significance of three population movements – overseas immigration from Ireland, migration from central and eastern Canada, and continental migration from the United States – in shaping Irish settlement patterns in western Canada in both rural and urban locations. It contends that the timing and circumstances of Prairie settlement gave rise to a distinctly regional variant of Irish identity in western Canada, expressed most clearly through the activity of Irish societies. The first Irish associations were established in Winnipeg, which emerged in the late nineteenth century as the regional Irish metropolis, and spread to cities in Saskatchewan and Alberta in the early twentieth century as Irish settlement extended across the region. These associations attracted both immigrant and intergenerational Irish and publicly articulated a variety of different Irish identities; the dominant vision of Irishness that emerged, however, placed the Irish firmly in a western Canadian context, emphasizing Irish contributions to the growth and development of the Prairie region. Western Canada was also home to a small but vocal group of Irish nationalists who dominated associational activity in the Prairie West during and immediately after the Great War, as the Irish national question entered its final and most critical stage. It was however the regional variant of Irish identity, rooted in the Prairie settlement experience, that reemerged and endured through the 1920s.

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Introduction

This thesis examines the history of the Irish in the Prairie West from the 1870s to the early 1930s, focusing primarily on two themes. First, it analyzes western Canada as a critical frontier of Irish settlement, a destination for both new Irish immigrants and for Irish-born and intergenerational Irish migrants moving to the Prairie West from elsewhere in North America. Second, it explores the evolution of Irish nationalism and identity in western Canada as projected through Irish associations which spread through the region's urban centres in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Central to the analysis of both themes is the significance of region. Put simply, the West mattered, both in terms of immigration, migr[illegible]nd settlement trends and in terms of the evolution of Irish nationalism and Irish Canadian identity. This thesis contends that patterns of Irish immigration and migration to the Prairie West, unique in Canada, ultimately gave rise to the development of a distinctly regional variant of Irish Canadian identity. Yet, Irishness in western Canada was not monolithic but negotiated in multiple contexts – the Prairie Irish were at once part of a global diaspora, an international empire, a national ethnic population and a regional society. By the early 1930s, however, the Irish in western Canada were first and foremost members of a self-consciously regional Irish community, articulating a vision of Irishness rooted firmly in and reflecting the peculiar circumstances of the Irish settlement experience in the Prairie West.

Western Canada emerged in the late nineteenth century as the most important region of Irish population growth in Canada. This expansion, part of the much larger process of the opening of the Prairie West for agricultural settlement, deviated strongly from national Irish demographic trends. Between 1881 and 1931 the total number of Irish-born individuals in Canada declined by over forty per cent, from 185,526 to 107,544.[1] The Irish-born populations of Ontario and Quebec fell by approximately two-thirds, while that of the Atlantic provinces fell by nearly ninety per cent. Conversely, the number of Irish-born resident in the three Prairie provinces grew from 1,898 to 28,558, due in part to immigration from Ireland, but also migration from elsewhere in North America, as Irish immigrants previously resident in Ontario, Quebec, the Maritime region and the United States relocated to western Canada.[2] A similar though less dramatic trend was discernible with Canada's Irish-origin population, which declined in Atlantic Canada by 26.8 percent and in Quebec by 12.5 percent between 1881 and 1931. During the same period Ontario's Irish-origin population remained relatively stable due to natural growth, increasing by a modest 3.3 percent, but the number of Irish-origin residents in the Prairie West grew by over a quarter of a million, from 10,173 in 1881 to 261,633 in 1931, as tens of thousands of intergenerational Irish settlers flooded into the Prairie region from other parts of Canada, as well as the United States.[3] By 1931, the Prairie provinces were home to 21.4 percent of the Irish-origin and 26.5 percent of the Irish-born populations of Canada.[4] These figures were very similar to the proportion of Canada's English population resident in western Canada at that point (20.7 percent of English origin and 26.4 percent of English born), though smaller than that of Scots living in the region (25.6 percent of Scottish origin and 29.1 percent of Scottish born).[5]

One of the most important consequences of this rapid growth in the number of Irish on the Prairies was the spread of Irish societies across western Canada, once again distinguishing the Prairie Irish experience from national trends. The decline in the number of Irish immigrants and the partial assimilation of intergenerational Irish resulted in the inexorable weakening of Irish associational activity in major centres of Irish concentration such as Toronto by the early twentieth century. In contrast, the expansion of western Canada's Irish population resulted in a flurry of Irish society growth, first in Winnipeg in the late nineteenth century and then across the region in the decade prior to the Great War. Irish associational leaders projected a vision of Irishness that stressed pride in Canadian citizenship and devotion to British imperialism, but they did so by emphasizing the leading role played by the Irish in developing western Canada, the place on which the future strength of both the Dominion and the empire depended. While joining together out of recognition of a common Irish heritage, these men (and they were overwhelmingly men, not women), fixed their gaze strongly on the Prairie West rather than on Ireland.

The Irish homeland, however, was far from irrelevant to the identity of the Prairie Irish. The spread of the Irish across western Canada came at a time of heightened political crisis in Ireland, with the intensification of the Home Rule movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the violent events of Easter 1916 and the subsequent Anglo-Irish War (1919-21). Irish immigrants to the Prairie West in this period came from a highly charged political environment, prompting some, though they never represented more than a minority, to establish societies with an explicitly nationalist agenda devoted to rallying support in the West for the cause of Home Rule and Irish independence. Dual visions of Irishness thus contested for influence in western Canada, with the unresolved national question in the homeland remaining central to the identity of a small but vocal segment of the Irish in the region. The urgency of the nationalist vision of Irishness faded with the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 and the regional variant of Irish identity, now infused with a safely depoliticized appreciation of Gaelic culture, dominated Irish associational activity for the balance of the decade.

While existing historiography has contributed much to our understanding of the history of the Irish in Canada, it has paid little attention to the experience of the Irish in the Prairie West. The only studies devoted specifically to Irish immigration, settlement and identity in western Canada have been articles by Bruce Proudfoot, Michael Cottrell and Richard Davis. Proudfoot's piece on the Irish in early Alberta is primarily biographical, highlighting the contributions of individual Irish pioneers in fields such as ranching, farming and missionary work, but offering little analysis of Irish population structure, settlement patterns or identity.[6] Cottrell offers a brief survey of the Irish in Saskatchewan, focusing primarily on intergenerational settlement and the expansion of institutions such as the Orange Order and the Roman Catholic Church as the best examples of enduring Irish influence in the province.[7] Davis contributes two articles examining Irish identity and nationalism in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Winnipeg. Most relevant to this dissertation is his analysis of persistent efforts by the city's Irish Catholic leaders to find accommodation with their Protestant counterparts and articulate Irishness in non-sectarian terms. His study, though, seriously underestimates the strength of militant Irish nationalism in the Manitoba capital, especially during the Great War.[8] Other commentators have made passing reference to the importance of the early twentieth-century Prairie wheat boom in attracting Irish immigrants, particularly from Ulster, but such observations are isolated and peripheral to the central focus of the monographs in question.[9]

The neglect of the Irish in the history of Prairie settlement stands in stark contrast to the attention devoted by historians to other groups, especially Mennonites, Icelanders and Ukrainians. As Royden Loewen argues, historians of Prairie ethnicity have traditionally focused on non-Anglophone ethnic groups due in large part to their high visibility, with populations dominated by the immigrant generation and often living in bloc settlements.[10] The Irish lacked this visibility, possessing no sizeable population concentrations anywhere in the region as group members spread throughout western Canada in patterns roughly similar to their Scottish and English counterparts. Indeed, Prairie historians have rarely considered the Irish a distinct ethnic population at all, with provincial histories either ignoring the Irish or grouping them together with other Anglophones in broad discussions of British, English-speaking or Anglo-Saxon settlement.[11] In his history of the Prairie West, for example, Gerald Friesen asserts that the British should be included in discussions of ethnicity, but his chapter on immigrant and ethnic communities makes little distinction between English, Scottish and Irish settlers.[12] And while John Herd Thompson notes the influx of English, Scottish, Welsh and Protestant Irish immigrants to the region during the wheat boom, he emphasizes the emergence of a common British identity in the face of non-Anglophone immigration.[13] While Britishness was certainly a crucial element of Anglophone immigrant identity in the Prairie West, an exclusive focus on it disregards the extent to which the English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish also retained distinct identities. Further, by singling out Irish Protestants, Thompson disregards the identity of Irish Catholics, either as a separate group or as part of this larger British collective.

In addition, broader trends in Irish Canadian historiography have worked against a comprehensive examination of the Prairie Irish. Studies of Irish immigration and settlement, for example, focus predominantly on central and eastern Canada and almost exclusively on the nineteenth century or earlier. Among the earliest important studies is Gordon Darroch and Michael Ornstein's 1980 article "Ethnicity and Occupational Structure in Canada in 1871: The Vertical Mosaic in Historical Perspective," which explores the relationship between religion, ethnicity and class in 1871 Canada.[14] In terms of Irish Canadian historiography, the authors' most critical finding is that Irish Catholics were not disproportionately urbanized or impoverished in Canada, and that a "national pattern of Irish Catholic urban proletarianization" did not exist.[15] Darroch and Ornstein also addressed the socio-economic status of Irish Catholics several years later with a more focused study of occupational mobility in Ontario, based on an extensive sampling of the 1861 and 1871 censuses. The authors contend that Irish Catholics were not confined to the ranks of the province's unskilled working class, and that an ethnic division of labour, with Irish Catholics trapped at the lowest ranks, did not exist in Ontario.[16] These two articles challenged the findings of scholars such as H.C. Pentland and John Porter, who had argued that Irish Catholics had overwhelmingly rejected farming in favour of a marginal existence as a pauperized working class in Canada's, and especially Ontario's, growing urban centres.[17]

Similar themes were addressed by Donald Harman Akenson in his highly influential monograph *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History.* First published in 1984, the book examines Irish settlement in Leeds and Landsdowne township, and challenged existing perceptions of the province's Irish population as being overwhelmingly Catholic, impoverished and urban.[18] Akenson contends that these popular assumptions about the Irish in Canada were based on the careless application of findings about the Irish in the United States to a Canadian context and concludes, in contrast, that the majority of Ontario's Irish settlers were Protestant; that both Catholic and Protestant Irish lived predominantly in rural rather than urban settings; and that Irish Catholics were no more economically disadvantaged than their Protestant counterparts.[19] He further argues that his findings call into question the assumption, widely held by historians of the Irish in the United States, that Irish Catholics were culturally predisposed to urbanization and poverty. Akenson would expand his critique of Irish American historiography in subsequent books, drawing particular attention to deficiencies in American census data and arguing that Canada, because of its much stronger primary source base, offers the only option for a reliable examination of the Irish experience in nineteenth-century North America.[20]

Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth offer a similarly revisionist perspective in their 1988 study, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters*. Rejecting the traditional focus on the Great Famine (1845-55) as the seminal event in Irish Canadian history, they point instead to the early nineteenth century as critical, emphasizing the importance of Protestant immigration to Canada in the decades prior to the Famine.[21] The structure of the book, however, reveals much about the nature and priorities of Irish Canadian historiography. Arguing that the field has been dominated by local and regional studies, the authors characterize their monograph as an effort to provide a national perspective on Irish immigration and settlement patterns. While offering rich detail on the history of the Irish in central and eastern Canada, the study largely ignores Irish settlement west of Ontario. Further, much of the short section on the Irish in western Canada is devoted to the "transfer of Irish-Canadian values" to the region through the spread of the Orange Order from Ontario, and to the role played by Archbishop John Joseph Lynch of Toronto in unsuccessful efforts to establish an Irish Catholic colony in Manitoba.[22] This institutional approach disregards the experience of the tens of thousands of Irish who did settle in western Canada and relegates the history of the Prairie Irish to little more than an afterthought to the history of the Irish in Ontario. The implication that a national study of Irish settlement in Canada can be written with such minimal attention to the Prairie West, or to British Columbia for that matter, points to a strong central Canadian bias in the evolution of Irish Canadian historiography.

Historians of the Irish in Ontario specifically have also contributed important microstudies, most notably by Catherine Anne Wilson and Bruce Elliott, of Irish immigration to Canada. Wilson analyzes the immigration of two landlords and over one hundred peasant farmers from Ireland to Upper Canada/Canada West between 1820 and 1850, finding that the traditional landlord-tenant relationship was reestablished in British North America. She also concludes that in this case at least both landlord and tenant classes, facing limited prospects in Ireland after the Napoleonic Wars, enjoyed greater success in the colony than in the homeland.[23]

Elliott's *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach* examines the chain migration and settlement of 775 Protestant families from central Ireland to Upper Canada/Canada West and Lower Canada/Canada East. Though focused on the period from 1818 through 1855, the monograph hints at the links between Irish settlement in Ontario and the West by following the life histories of the original settlers' descendants, many of whom migrated to Manitoba in the 1870s and 1880s.[24] Elliott thus illustrates, though briefly, how the Prairie West became a settlement frontier for intergenerational Irish facing land shortages in late nineteenth-century Ontario.

The other region to receive significant attention from historians of the Irish is Atlantic Canada, most notably Newfoundland and New Brunswick. Research on the Irish in Newfoundland has dwelt on the relationship between trade and settlement beginning in the late seventeenth century and consequent efforts by the British government to limit the Irish presence on the island. John Mannion, for example, illustrates the role of the migratory fishery and provisions trade in shaping immigration patterns to Newfoundland from Ireland in the eighteenth century, especially in the port cities of Wexford and Waterford.[25] He also examines the deep suspicion with which the British government viewed the resulting Irish Catholic population in the colony as potentially disloyal, particularly during periods of war with France.[26] Willeen Keough focuses more specifically on the gender dimensions of Irish settlement in Newfoundland and how Irish women came under particular scrutiny from secular and religious authorities. Catholic clergymen viewed them as a threat to their spiritual authority due to the Irish woman's traditional role in peasant folk religion, while British authorities actively discouraged Irish Catholic women from settling in Newfoundland in an effort to prevent the emergence of Irish family settlement.[27]

Driven largely by the unique circumstances of the island's development, the historiography of the Irish in Newfoundland has been somewhat detached from debates, salient in Ontario and elsewhere, about Irish rural and urban settlement patterns and the relative socio-economic success of Catholic and Protestant immigrants. Such issues were more relevant to the history of the Irish in New Brunswick and have thus been reflected in that province's scholarship. In a 1988 article, for example, Peter Toner directly challenged the findings of Darroch and Ornstein regarding the comparable material success of Catholic and Protestant Irish in Canada in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Based on his own analysis of 1851 and 1861 census data for New Brunswick, Toner concludes that Irish Catholics in that colony were much more likely to be impoverished than Protestant Irish, calling into question Darroch and Ornstein's methodology and conclusion that such inequality did not exist.[28] He further suggests that methodological problems also likely plagued Akenson's research on the Irish in Ontario, though Toner's own conclusions would be contested several years later in a response by Gordon Darroch.[29] Finally, Scott See examines the issue of sectarian violence in Saint John in his book *Riots in New Brunswick: Orange Nativism and Social Violence in the 1840s*. The mass immigration of Irish Catholics during the Great Famine, he argues, raised tension between Irish Catholics and Protestants as the influx created intense competition for jobs in an already depressed economy. See thus views sectarian violence in 1840s

New Brunswick as more a result of economic realities in the colony than the transfer of hostilities from Ireland.[30]

The focus of the historiography on central and eastern Canada is largely a product of the scale and historical importance of Irish immigration and settlement in those regions. British North America was the leading destination for Irish immigration in the thirty years after the Napoleonic War, though not in the Famine and immediate post-Famine periods, and the Irish constituted the largest Anglo-Celtic ethnic group in Canada until the 1890s. They were therefore central to the social, political and economic development of early-to-mid-nineteenth-century British North America, making it natural that, as Michael Cottrell has noted, historiographic attention focused on the geographic regions where the immigrant generation was largest and most influential.[31] The scale of Irish immigration to the Prairie West, while sizeable at times, never approached that of the early nineteenth century to British North America. Nor did the overall extent of Irish influence in Prairie development ever equal or rival that of the Irish in Ontario, Quebec or the Atlantic colonies. With the focus of historians drawn to regions where the impact of Irish settlement was greatest, the Prairie West has generally been neglected in the existing historiography of the Irish in Canada.

This scholarly emphasis on areas of high immigration has inevitably privileged those same regions in studies of intergenerational Irish ethnicity. Arguably the most sweeping comment regarding this dimension of Irishness on a national scale was made in 1989 by David Wilson in his Canadian Historical Association booklet on the Irish in Canada. Drawing primarily on research conducted in the 1970s and 1980s on the Irish in Ontario and Atlantic Canada, Wilson suggests that full assimilation into Anglo-Canadian society was the overriding goal of the Irish ethnic group. By the twentieth century, he insists, the "Irish had achieved their ultimate objective; they were no longer Irish."[32] Subsequent studies validated Wilson's basic claim about assimilation while offering a much more nuanced picture of the processes by which Irish identity was negotiated and eventually weakened. In this regard, no centre has received more attention than Toronto, home to Canada's largest intergenerational Irish population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, while studies of immigration sought to balance analyses of both Protestant and Catholic Irish, examinations of intergenerational ethnicity in Toronto have focused almost exclusively on Irish Catholics. A rare exception is the work of William Jenkins, who looks at the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society in late Victorian Toronto as a critical social space for Irish Protestant fraternity and the articulation of Irishness rooted in conceptions of imperial loyalty.[33] As Jenkins himself notes, Irish Protestant identity has largely been ignored by historians who have long taken for granted that Irish Protestants immediately assimilated into mainstream Anglo-Protestant Canadian society, and, as such, were not worthy of study.[34]

In contrast, the evolution of intergenerational Irish Catholic identity in Toronto has been the subject of several important studies, most of which have focused on the assimilation of the Canadian-born Irish into mainstream Anglo-Canadian society. Michael Cottrell's examination of St. Patrick's Day parades in Toronto, for example, notes that militant Irish nationalism went against the grain of mainstream Canadian socio-political values and interfered with Irish Catholics' "natural desire to become

Canadian." According to Cottrell, the Irish Catholic group abandoned its Irish identity by the 1870s, viewing themselves instead as Anglophone Canadian Catholics.[35] Cottrell's general observations are echoed by Brian Clarke and Mark McGowan in their more in-depth studies of Irish Catholic identity in Toronto. Clarke focuses on the evolution of Irish Catholic associational life in the second half of the nineteenth century and the decline of Irish nationalism as a nexus along which Irish Catholic identity was negotiated. He notes how lay voluntary associations established by intergenerational Irish Catholics gravitated away from militant Irish nationalism, with the Catholic faith and the English language rather than distant ties to the Irish homeland becoming central to their identity by the 1890s.[36] Similarly, McGowan examines the rise of a Canadian-born Irish Catholic population in Toronto that abandoned emotional ties to Ireland in favour of an identity as Anglophone Canadian Catholics, culminating in their enthusiastic response to imperial service during the Great War.[37]

The decline in Toronto of specifically Irish Catholic ethnic associations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stands in sharp contrast to the experience of the Irish in western Canada in the same period. With over two dozen Irish society branches established in the region between 1874 and 1930, the objective of the western Canadian Irish, Catholic and Protestant alike, was clearly not to disappear as an identifiable group. To some extent, the difference between Toronto and the Prairie West points to the importance of regional variations in Irish settlement and population growth on identity formation. While the steady decline of Toronto's Irish immigrant population contributed to the erosion of Irish identity in that city, the influx of immigrants into Prairie urban centres, especially in the early twentieth century, was an important catalyst for the steady increase in Irish societies across the region. At the same time, the participation of many Ontario-born Irish in Prairie associational activity into the early twentieth century calls into question the extent to which intergenerational Irish were indeed fully assimilated in central Canada. To play on the title of McGowan's study, if Irishness was waning in Toronto, it was waxing in the Prairie West during the same period, in part due to the active participation of those born in Ontario who chose to publicly identify as Irish through associational activity in western Canada.

Irish immigration, settlement and identity formation in western Canada did not, of course, occur in complete isolation from developments in the rest of Canada. As a regional ethnic community, the Prairie Irish were still part of a national population, and some of the conclusions drawn by Clarke and McGowan are directly relevant to this study. While stressing the declining strength of Irish nationalism among Toronto's Irish Catholic population, both authors concede that particular trends and events in Ireland could act as catalysts for renewed interest in the Irish homeland, reconceptualized in a Canadian context. Clarke notes, for example, that the widespread popularity in Canada of Home Rule leader Charles Parnell in the 1880s led Irish Catholic leaders in Toronto, previously assiduously avoiding homeland politics, to rally support for the cause in conjunction with the city's leading Irish Protestants.[38] Similarly, McGowan notes that Irish Catholic leaders in Toronto, who had taken little interest in Home Rule in the years leading up to the Great War, actively supported it in the postwar years, albeit not out of sympathy for the demands of Irish nationalists but as a measure consistent with the aim of the peacemakers in Versailles regarding self-determination for small nations.[39] In both cases the trends detected in Toronto were replicated in western Canada as many prominent Irish citizens and associational leaders, traditionally lukewarm at best to the Home Rule movement, lent their support to the campaign. In the critical period from 1916 to 1922, this meant accommodation with a small but devoted group of western Canadian Irish nationalists, located primarily in Winnipeg, who had offered consistent and vocal support for Irish independence since the early twentieth century.

While focused on the Prairie Irish as a regional community within a national population, this study is also informed by the findings of relevant studies of the Irish in the United States. For example, the process of Irish identity formation in western Canada was similar in important respects to the pattern detected by David Emmons among Irish copper miners in Butte, Montana, between 1875 and 1925. His analysis of the dominance of the Irish in the social structure of Butte's mining community, and of the relationship between working-class radicalism and militant Irish nationalism, led him to conclude that the salience of Irish ethnic identity strengthened rather than weakened in Butte in the early twentieth century. A fresh influx of highly politicized immigrants after 1905, challenging the town's existing, and highly conservative, Irish leadership, was largely responsible.[40] Emmons, who explicitly noted the omission from the scholarship in the United States of the Irish in the American West, has made the most significant contribution to the historiography of the Irish in that country west of the Great Lakes. His work clearly points to the necessity of taking into account variations of Irish immigration and settlement patterns and their impact on regional differences in Irish identity formation.

In addition to immigrant Irish, this study incorporates the experience of the intergenerational Irish group in western Canada. As Houston and Smyth indicate, any serious study of the Irish in the Prairie West cannot only be confined to new immigrants but must also incorporate Canadian-born Irish, who "carried with them the traditions of a migrant society seeking social advancement through geographical mobility."[41] The challenge of analyzing intergenerational migration, however, rests in the essential invisibility of the Canadian-born Irish. If immigrant Irish lacked the visibility of non-Anglophone Prairie ethnic groups, the problem was far worse for the intergenerational Irish, who had little to distinguish them from their largely Ontario-born English or Scottish counterparts. Nonetheless, sufficient evidence is available to analyze the migration experience of at least some intergenerational Irish to illustrate how Irish settlement in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada was often a two-stage process, with the land-hungry children of immigrants who had previously settled in the British North American colonies extending the Irish settlement frontier westward after 1870. In many cases, the original immigrants became migrants themselves, moving west with their Canadian-born offspring in search of better economic opportunities. In addition, the spread of ethnic and other associations across the Prairie West provides another window into the experience of the intergenerational Prairie Irish. This approach has been used most effectively by Michael Cottrell in his study of the Irish in Saskatchewan, examining the spread of the Orange Order and the Roman Catholic Church as products of intergenerational

Irish population growth.[42] The present study builds upon such work by examining intergenerational Irish participation in specifically Irish associations across the region, many of which were founded and led by the Canadian-born children of Irish immigrants, in contrast to the apparent lack of such participation in central and eastern Canada.

Finally, this thesis responds to Kevin Kenny's call to conceptualize the history of Irish emigrants and their descendants as members of a global diaspora.[43] This dimension of the Irish experience in Canada appears seldom in the existing historiography. The only historian who has self-consciously sought to situate the Canadian Irish experience in an international context has been Donald Harman Akenson, who argues, for example, that his conclusions about Catholic and Protestant Irish in Ontario call into question broad assumptions about fundamental cultural differences between Protestant and Catholic Irish in the United States and even Ireland in the nineteenth century.[44] Other scholars have examined the close linkages between Ireland and Canada but without conceptualizing the Irish in Canada as part of a global community. In part, this omission reflects the extent to which historians have downplayed the strength of militant Irish nationalism in Canada, arguably the most important dimension of diasporic consciousness. Indeed, it is this element that makes the international dimension so critical to understanding the experience of the Irish in the Prairie West. While a minority in western Canada, Irish nationalists were linked through their political activism to like-minded Irish in the homeland, elsewhere in Canada and throughout the world, joining international organizations and participating in diasporic campaigns to support Home Rule and Irish independence.

Most famous among these Irish nationalists was Katherine Hughes of Edmonton, who played a leading role organizing western Canada's branches of the Self-Determination for Ireland League in 1919-20 before going to direct organizational efforts in Australia and New Zealand.[45] Though few individuals played as activist a role as Hughes, Irish nationalists in western Canada were part of a global movement that gained momentum during and immediately after the Great War, subject to trends and influences at work in Ireland and throughout the diaspora.

Prairie Irish who participated in associational activity, like their counterparts in Irish communities elsewhere in Canada and across the world, chose St. Patrick's Day as the most important occasion on which to publicly project their vision of Irishness to the wider population. As Daryl Adair and Mike Cronin argue, St. Patrick's Day was at once an ethnic and a mainstream holiday, simultaneously a public expression of Irish identity and a widely observed public event. It was a day that could accommodate similarity or difference, and exclusiveness or integration, in response to the particular goals of the various Irish associational leaders planning the celebrations.[46] An international perspective on the evolution of St. Patrick's Day celebrations points to the fact that events held in western Canada followed trends in Toronto and Montreal, as well as in other British settlement colonies such as New Zealand and Australia, where most participants sought to balance expressions of Irishness with affirmations of loyalty to Britain. While harnessed by some nationalists to launch fiery condemnations of British imperialism, most St. Patrick's Day celebrations in western Canada, like their counterparts in Toronto, Montreal, Sydney, Melbourne and Auckland, were used to stress mainstream integration. The identity of the Prairie Irish, expressed most clearly in the annual St. Patrick's Day ritual, was part of a much larger Irish culture extending to other fields of settlement in the British Empire, celebrating the compatibility of Irishness with national and imperial loyalties.[47]

In insisting upon the relevance of region to understanding the history of the Prairie Irish, this study is informed by the work of historians such as Gerald Friesen who argues that the three Prairie provinces, by virtue of a common geography, economy, culture and history, constituted a distinct region from the 1870s through the Second World War.[48] It is thus important at the outset to clarify that 'Prairie West' and 'western Canada' are used interchangeably to describe present-day Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Unless explicitly stated, western Canada does not include British Columbia. While preliminary investigation points to some general similarities between British Columbia and the Prairie West in terms of Irish population growth and associational activity, the significance of any similarities is outweighed by two critical issues. First, the common history, geography and culture which contributed to the evolution of the Prairie West as a distinct region were not shared by the Pacific province. Second, and most important in terms of identity formation, the regional Irish identity articulated through Irish societies across the Prairie West disregarded British Columbia. The gaze of Irish associational leaders celebrating Irish contributions to regional development did not extend beyond the Rocky Mountains, and the formal and informal links which developed among Irish associations in Prairie urban centres did not extend to Vancouver or Victoria.

The other term which requires clarification is 'Irish.' As Donald Harman Akenson has noted, the very issue of defining Irish is heavily contested, with many nineteenth-century political leaders and modern historians alike choosing to accept as truly Irish only those who fit into particular religious or political categories.[49] Some of the limited historiography on the Irish in western Canada has mirrored this trend. Proudfoot's analysis of the Irish role in late nineteenth-century Albertan settlement, for example, distinguishes "genuine Irishmen" from both "Ulstermen" and "Irish and Scotch-Irish from eastern Canada."[50] When analyzing Irish immigration to western Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, such distinctions obscure more than they enlighten, and this study follows Akenson's lead in adopting a broader, geographic definition of Irish, devoid of sectarian or other qualifications. For the purpose of determining immigration, migration and settlement patterns, anyone whose birthplace was listed as Ireland in the census or other source material is considered Irish, regardless of the individual's own primary identity. It is irrelevant, for example, whether or not the son of a Protestant landowner from County Limerick who took up ranching in southern Alberta considered himself Irish: he was part of the larger population movement from Ireland to the Prairie West and falls under the parameters of this thesis. Similarly, anyone not born in Ireland but whose ethnic origin appeared in the census as Irish is considered to be part of the intergenerational Irish group.

This broad classification of Irish, based on birthplace or heritage, is replaced with a much more limited and subjective definition of Irish when it comes to analyzing the evolution of identity. A focus on Irishness as articulated through associational activity carries certain disadvantages, narrowing the definition of Irish to those who participated in such societies and thus presumably self-identified as Irish. Only a small minority of Prairie Irish ever joined Irish societies, which rarely numbered more than a few hundred members each at any given time. These societies were also overwhelmingly situated in the region's larger cities; while immigrant letters and local histories provide occasional glimpses into Irish identity formation in smaller urban and rural communities, the concentration on institutional identity concentrates by default on the Irish in major urban settings. Further, Irish societies were almost exclusively the domain of men in western Canada until the 1920s, when women began to play a much more prominent role in associational activity; for most of the period under examination, then, Irish associational culture reflected male priorities and male biases.

With these caveats in mind, a study of Irish identity as articulated through Irish societies yields considerable insight into how prominent Irish men, typically from the middle or professional classes, could harness and redefine Irishness to serve different agendas. In short, competing and evolving visions of Irishness reflected the ambitions of Irish associational leaders as the Prairie West moved from a fluid environment of frontier settlement to a more structured regional society. Irishness was never a fixed quantity or identity and its boundaries shifted in response to changing social and political circumstances. Irish identity was at various times defined as exclusively Catholic by those who believed that the group's interests were best served through an alliance with the region's Francophone Catholics; as non-sectarian by Catholics and Protestants alike who sought accommodation across religious boundaries; as nationalist by those who strove to rally support for the Home Rule movement; and as explicitly non-political by those determined to ensure that Irishness was compatible with both broader Canadian and imperial loyalties. The durability over several decades of regional Irishness, which emphasized integration rather than exclusiveness and promoted Irish contributions to Prairie development, ultimately reflects the dominant long-term ambitions of the Irish group as determined by its self-appointed spokesmen.

The source materials available for an examination of the Irish in western Canada are varied, ranging from government collections to private correspondence. Records from the Departments of Agriculture, Immigration and the Interior provide a solid base for analysis of Ottawa's immigration policy with regard to Ireland, which in turn was shaped by the Canadian government's vision of the place of the Irish in western settlement. Published census reports yield a variety of quantifiable data, while immigrant letters offer personal and often detailed accounts of Irish life in the West. Local histories also contain much critical information, particularly in the form of family biographies and narratives that plot the settlement process for Irish immigrants and migrants alike. Comprehensive records from the Irish societies established in western Canada through the 1920s are very sparse, but other sources provide a window into their activities. Lists of executive officers for each society were printed annually in city directories, which, when cross-referenced with biographical dictionaries, obituaries and census data, allow for a reconstruction of associational leadership. Newspapers reported extensively on society meetings, elections, annual reports and public celebrations, most importantly events held on St.

Patrick's Day. As E. Moore Quinn notes, speeches and toasts at St. Patrick's Day events were carefully scripted and structured, with the full expectation that they would later be printed verbatim in the press.[51] Newspaper coverage of St. Patrick's Day thus reveals to a large degree how Irish societies on the Prairies sought to be represented to the general public.

The time period chosen for the study encompasses the most critical period of Irish immigration, migration and settlement, as well as of Irish associational activity, in the history of western Canada. It begins in the early 1870s after the transfer of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Dominion of Canada, shifting the emphasis in the region from the fur trade to agricultural settlement. It closes in the early 1930s, after which time western Canada's Irish population went into steady decline for decades and Irish associational activity faltered. Within these six decades, the dual themes of Irish settlement and identity formation fall into two periods, and while no periodization is absolutely precise, the early 1900s represent the most logical dividing point. The early twentieth century was an important time of transition as the Irish population, following broader regional patterns as well as particular developments in Irish immigration, grew rapidly and spread across the Prairie West in conjunction with the wheat boom. It was also after the turn of the twentieth century that Irish associational activity, previously confined almost exclusively to Winnipeg, proliferated across western Canada. These two stages form the broad organizational framework of the study, with two chapters in each stage analyzing the simultaneous evolution of Irish settlement and identity formation.

Chapter one examines Irish immigration, migration and settlement patterns in the Prairie West from 1870 through the early 1900s. Not only did the Dominion government expand its promotional efforts in Ireland to attract immigrants for settlement and labour, but Irish population growth in the region was also fuelled by the migration of tens of thousands of Irish, both immigrant and intergenerational, from central and eastern Canada. These developments were most notable in Manitoba, though pockets of settlement emerged throughout the rural West, including a strong Irish presence in the southern Alberta ranching industry. It was in this period as well that Winnipeg emerged as the regional Irish metropolis. Chapter two analyzes the earliest foundations of Irish associational activity in the region, beginning with the establishment of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba in Winnipeg in 1874. Harnessed initially by the city's Roman Catholic elite to define Irishness along sectarian lines and form stronger links with the city's Francophone Catholic population, Irish societies soon came under the control of prominent Irish businessmen and professionals who rejected the narrow sectarian emphasis of their predecessors. The resulting vision of Irish identity, which dominated Irish associational culture from the early 1880s through the first years of the twentieth century, stressed non-sectarian harmony and Irish contributions to regional growth and development, reflecting the ambitions of Irish leaders seeking to position the Irish at the forefront of a rapidly crystallizing frontier settlement society.

Chapter three analyzes the growth of western Canada's Irish population from the early 1900s to the early 1930s, once again through the twin processes of immigration and migration. Expansion was greatest in the decade prior to the Great

War as tens of thousands of Irish were drawn to the region by the tremendous economic prosperity of the wheat boom. After a lull during the war years, the Prairie West's Irish population grew again in the 1920s, a result of natural growth as well as a sharp increase in immigration, with many Irish fleeing the economic and political uncertainty of postwar Ireland. The period was also marked by increased urbanization, as the group established a strong presence in the region's major cities, though none could compete with Winnipeg. The consequences of this population growth for Irish identity are explored in chapter four, which examines Irish associational activity and culture in the first decades of the twentieth century. The decade prior to the Great War was the most vibrant period of Irish society activity in western Canada's entire history, with Irish associations being established across the region. It was also during these years that the struggle between competing visions of Irishness was most fierce as Irish nationalists, given momentum by the escalation of the Home Rule crisis, challenged the ascendancy of Irish elites focused on celebrating Irish contributions to regional development. This nationalist vision gained momentum from the Great War but did not long outlast it, and by 1922 the regional variant of Irishness was dominant once again. Safely depoliticized by the resolution of Ireland's national question, Irishness came to be celebrated as a folk identity during the 1920s.

Notes

[1] *Census of Canada*, 1881, vol. 1, Table 3, 398-99; and *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 45, 710-13.

[2] *Census of Canada*, 1881, vol. 1, Table 3, 398; and *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 45, 712-13.

[3] David A. Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1989), 10.

[4] *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 45, 709-13; and Wilson, *The Irish in Canada*, 10.

[5] *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 31, 294-95, and vol. 2, Table 45, 710-13.

[6] Bruce Proudfoot, "Irish Settlers in Alberta," *Ulster Folklife* 15/16 (1970): 216-23.

[7] Michael Cottrell, "The Irish in Saskatchewan, 1850-1930: A Study of Intergenerational Ethnicity," *Prairie Forum* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 185-209.

[8] Richard Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*, ed. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988), 393-416; and Richard Davis, "Irish Catholics and the Manitoba School Crisis, 1885-1921," *Eire-Ireland* 8, no. 3 (1973): 29-64.

[9] See, for example, Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diasproa: A Primer* (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1996), 266; Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 219-26; and Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 348.

[10] Royden Loewen, "On the Margin or in the Lead? Canadian Prairie Historiography," *Agricultural History* 73, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 37-39.

[11] John Hall Archer, *Saskatchewan: A History* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), 104, 118; James G. MacGregor, *A History of Alberta* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1981), 167, 206-07; William L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 253, 276, 296, 309, 319; Howard and Tamara Palmer, *Alberta: A New History* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1990), 82; Howard Palmer, *Land of the Second Chance: A History of Ethnic Groups in Southern Alberta* (Lethbridge, AB: The Lethbridge Herald, 1974), 209-11; and Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History* (Calgary: Fifth House Ltd., 2005), 67.

[12] Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 242-73.

[13] John Herd Thompson, *Forging the Prairie West* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 76-7.

[14] A. Gordon Darroch and Michael D. Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Occupational Structure in Canada in 1871: The Vertical Mosaic in Historical Perspective," *Canadian Historical Review* 61, no. 3 (September 1980): 305-33.

[15] Darroch and Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Occupational Structure in Canada in 1871," 314.

[16] A. Gordon Darroch and Michael Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Class, Transitions Over a Decade: Ontario, 1861-1871," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* 1984: 11-37.

[17] H.C. Pentland, "The Development of the Capitalistic Labour Market in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 25, no. 4 (November 1959): 450-61; and John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).

[18] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History*, 2nd ed. (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

[19] Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario*, 34-35, 39, 46-47.

[20] Donald Harman Akenson, *Being Had: Historians, Evidence, and the Irish in North America* (Don Mills, ON: P.D. Meany, 1985); Akenson, *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1922: An International Perspective* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 86-107; and Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 217-33.

[21] Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement*, 3-7.

[22] Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement*, 219-226.

[23] Catherine Anne Wilson, *A New Lease on Life: Landlords, Tenants and Immigrants in Ireland and Canada* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

[24] Bruce Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*, 2nd ed. (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 185-91.

[25] John Mannion, "Irish Migration and Settlement in Newfoundland: The Formative Period, 1697-1732," *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 257-93.

[26] John Mannion, "'…Notoriously Disaffected to the Government': British Allegations of Irish Disloyalty in Eighteenth-Century Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Studies* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 1-29.

[27] Willeen Keough, "The Riddle of Peggy Mountain: Regulation of Irish Women's Sexuality on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860," *Acadiensis* 31, no. 2 (Autumn 2002): 38-70; and Keough, "The 'Old Hag' Revisits Saint Brigid: Irish Women and the Intersection Of Belief Systems on the Southern Avalon, Newfoundland," in *Weather's Edge: Women in Newfoundland and Labrador*, eds. Linda Cullum, Carmelita McGrath and Marilyn Porter (St. John's: Killick Press, 2006), 11-22.

[28] P.M. Toner, "Occupation and Ethnicity: The Irish in New Brunswick," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 20, no. 3 (1988): 155-65.

[29] Gordon Darroch, "Half Empty or Half Full? Images and Interpretations in the Historical Analysis of the Catholic Irish in Nineteenth-Century Canada," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 25, no. 1 (1993): 1-8.

[30] Scott See, *Riots in New Brunswick: Orange Nativism and Social Violence in the 1840s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

[31] Cottrell, "The Irish in Saskatchewan, 1850-1930," 185.

[32] Wilson, *The Irish in Canada*, 21.

[33] William Jenkins, "Between the Lodge and the Meeting-House: Mapping Irish Protestant Identities and Social Worlds in Late Victorian Toronto," *Social and Cultural Geography* 4, no. 1 (March 2003): 75-98.

[34] Jenkins, "Between the Lodge and the Meeting-House," 75.

[35] Michael Cottrell, "St. Patrick's Day Parades in Nineteenth-Century Toronto: A Study of Immigrant Adjustment and Elite Control," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 49 (May 1992): 72-73.
[36] Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 252.
[37] Mark G. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 14-15.
[38] Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 228-30.
[39] McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 251.
[40] David M. Emmons, *The Butte Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 10, 260-62.
[41] Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement*, 219-22.
[42] Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement*, 222; and Cottrell, "The Irish in Saskatchewan," 194-209.
[43] Kevin Kenny, "Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study," *Journal of American History* 90, no. 1 (June 2003): 134-62.
[44] Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario*, 344-53.
[45] Pádraig Ó Siadhail, "Profiles of Irish-Canadians: Katherine Angelina Hughes," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 70-73.
[46] Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St. Patrick's Day* (New York: Routledge, 2002), xv.
[47] Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 249-50; McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 94-95; Cronin and Adair, *The Wearing of the Green*, 84-85; Rory Sweetman, "'The Importance of Being Irish': Hibernianism in New Zealand, 1869-1969," in *A Distant Shore: Irish Migration and New Zealand Settlement*, ed. Lyndon Fraser (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2000), 135-54; and Patrick O'Farrell, "St. Patrick's Day in Australia: The John Alexander Ferguson Lecture, 1994," *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 81, no. 1 (June 1995): 1-16. For examples of St. Patrick's Day celebrations outside of the British Empire, see Sallie Marston, "Public Rituals and Community Power: St. Patrick's Day in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1841-74," *Political Geography Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (July 1989): 255-69; Timothy J. Meagher, "'Why Should We Care for a Little Trouble or a Walk Through the Mud?' St. Patrick's and Columbus Day Parades in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1845-1915," *New England Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (March 1985): 5-26; and Kenneth Moss, "St. Patrick's Day Celebrations and the Formation of Irish-American Identity, 1845-75," *Journal of Social History* 29 (Fall 1995): 125-48.
[48] Gerald Friesen, *The West: Regional Ambitions, National Debates, Global Age* (Toronto: Penguin/McGill Institute, 1999), 3-10.
[49] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 10-16.
[50] Proudfoot, "Irish Settlers in Alberta," 219.
[51] E. Moore Quinn, "Toasters and Boasters: John D. Crimmins's *St. Patrick's Day* (1902)," *New Hibernia Review/Iris Éireannach Nua* 8, no. 3 (Autumn/Fómhar 2004): 18-30.

Chapter One

Irish Immigration, Migration and Settlement in Western Canada in the Late Nineteenth Century

Born in County Donegal in 1814, John Sanderson immigrated to Upper Canada with his parents and siblings in 1835. He settled on a farm near the town of Mariners, married and with his wife raised a family of ten children. By the early 1870s, the family farm could no longer provide for their needs and the eldest sons, Joseph and Thomas, uprooted and moved to Manitoba. Joseph homesteaded near Portage la Prairie in 1874, while three years later Thomas became one of the first settlers to homestead in the Holland district. The rest of the family followed the two brothers in 1879, with father John and a third son, James, taking homesteads near Portage. A fourth son, John Jr., would subsequently move further west the following decade and settle near Manor in the North-West Territories, though consecutive years of crop failure would drive him back to the Holland district where he purchased land and farmed until his retirement in 1924.[1]

Also turning to western Canada in search of better economic opportunity in the same period were John and Andrew Muirhead of Ballymena, County Antrim. As younger sons in Ireland, they stood no prospect of inheriting land in a society where primogeniture had become the norm by the late nineteenth century. The Muirhead brothers travelled to Sewell, Manitoba, in early 1882, working for the Canadian Pacific Railway before moving further west at the end of the year to purchase land and take up homesteads near Moose Jaw. After several years' residence, they moved back to Manitoba, settling in the Douglas district where eighteen family members and acquaintances from Ireland, including John's fiancée Margaret, joined them in 1888.

For Margaret, the move to Manitoba was a double reunion; in addition to joining her betrothed, she was reuniting with her sister Mary who had immigrated to Ontario with her husband John Moore in 1873 and moved west to the Douglas district six years later. The Muirheads, Moores and several other Irish immigrant families lived in a section of Douglas known colloquially as the Irish corner and commemorated their Ulster roots by establishing the Derry school district in 1900.[2]

The examples of the Sanderson and Muirhead families effectively illustrate the different routes taken by thousands of Irish migrants and immigrants who settled the Prairie West in the last decades of the nineteenth century. This movement was shaped by a variety of regional, national and international influences, the most important of which was the opening of western Canada for agricultural settlement. The transfer of Rupert's Land to the Dominion of Canada and the subsequent passage of the Dominion Lands Act in 1872 made the Prairie West the greatest settlement frontier in Canada, and one of the most promising in the British Empire. The lure of superior economic opportunity drew Irish migrants and immigrants alike, and the region's Irish population grew rapidly. By 1901, there were 47,418 people of Irish ethnicity residing in Manitoba plus another 18,797 in the North-West Territories; these numbers included 4,537 and 2,158 people born in Ireland and living in the two jurisdictions, respectively.[3]

This chapter analyzes Irish immigration, migration and settlement in western Canada in the late nineteenth century. The majority of Irish who settled the region in this period came as migrants from central and eastern Canada, especially Ontario where land shortages and a weak agricultural economy were driving people out to seek new opportunities in the Prairie West. The migrant group consisted of intergenerational Irish as well as acculturated Irish immigrants, those who were born in Ireland but had lived part or much of their lives in Canada before moving west. While forming the largest cohort of the Irish population in this period, the migrants were often invisible, with little to distinguish them from their English and Scottish counterparts. Far more visible were the much more limited number of Irish who immigrated directly to the Prairie settlement frontier as profound social and economic changes in late nineteenth-century Ireland sustained high levels of emigration in the decades after the Great Famine (1845-55). Existing patterns of immigration ensured that the United States would attract the majority of Irish crossing the Atlantic, but direct immigration to Canada contributed to Irish settlement in the Prairie West, especially during the 1880s, and Irish immigrants became the focus of government policy in both the Dominion and the United Kingdom. The Dominion government welcomed Irish immigration as part of its ambitious plan for Prairie settlement and regional economic development, while the British government viewed Irish emigration with favour as a means of alleviating population pressure and violent disorder in rural Ireland. Immigration to Canada, however, was the source of some controversy in Ireland, with nationalists targeting the Dominion as part of a broader anti-emigration campaign.

Whether migrant or immigrant, the bulk of the Irish presence in the late nineteenth-century Prairie West was concentrated in the rural countryside, predominantly Manitoba, but with pockets of settlement in the North-West Territories as well. The Irish also moved to the region's growing urban centres, both as permanent residents and as temporary labourers, with Winnipeg emerging as the focal point of an Irish urban presence. Though many Irish, particularly immigrants, fell into the ranks of the unskilled labour class, the experience of the Irish in Winnipeg was not that of a ghettoized minority. In terms of socio-economic status and residential distribution, the Irish were prototypical Anglo-Celtic Winnipeggers and by the late nineteenth century, the Irish were well represented in the city's political and economic elite.

The Rural Context

Irish settlement in the late nineteenth-century Prairie West was overwhelmingly rural, with 71.8 percent of Irish in Manitoba and 69.1 percent of Irish in the North-West Territories living in rural locations by 1901.[4] For the intergenerational migrants who dominated the region's Irish population, the move west was often an escape from depressed economic conditions, poor land and, most importantly, land shortages in central and eastern Canada, especially Ontario. As historian David Gagan notes in his 1981 monograph *Hopeful Travelers: Families, Land and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West*, the passage of the Dominion Lands Act in 1872 essentially transformed Manitoba into a colony of Ontario, creating a settlement frontier for a province facing a serious rural economic crisis. The 1860s were a particularly precarious decade for Ontario agriculture, with crop failures, falling wheat prices and contracting markets contributing to pressure which would stimulate migration out of the province in the 1870s. The most serious issue facing Ontario farmers, however, was a shortage of affordable, high-quality agricultural land, critical in a society where farm ownership was equated with economic independence. As Gagan argues, migration to the Prairie West was the most promising strategy for many young Ontario men facing limited prospects of inheriting or otherwise acquiring land by the late nineteenth century.[5]

In this way, migration to western Canada was an extension across generational boundaries of Irish settlement in early nineteenth-century Upper Canada/Canada West. One example, cited briefly by Gagan, illustrates this process with the descendants of John Standish Leslie. Born in Peel County, Upper Canada, in 1827 to Irish immigrant parents, Leslie fathered nine children, five of whom would migrate to western Canada as a result of land shortages in Peel County. Three of Leslie's five sons homesteaded in Manitoba, while two of his four daughters moved west with their spouses in search of better economic prospects.[6] Similarly, Bruce Elliott's study of Irish Protestant immigration from County Tipperary to Upper Canada/Canada West examines the western migration of dozens of Canadian-born descendants of the Tipperary immigrants after the Prairie West was opened for agricultural settlement. In 1879, seven Ontario capitalists, including future Manitoba premier Thomas Greenway, established the Rock Lake Colonization Company to settle families from Ontario near Crystal Creek in southern Manitoba. Among the investors was Arthur Rollins, a descendant of the Tipperary immigrants; his involvement in the project drew three of his brothers and two nephews to settle the area. At least two dozen other families with Tipperary roots joined the movement to southern Manitoba, both as part of the colonization project and as individual homesteaders, driven west by the same pressures of land shortage and agricultural depression stimulating migration from elsewhere in Ontario.[7] For other Irish farmers, the poor quality of land in

Ontario was a decisive factor motivating their migration. John and Letitia Mooney, the parents of Nellie McClung, moved their family from Sullivan Township in Ontario to southern Manitoba, settling on a homestead in the Souris valley. In her autobiography *Clearing in the West*, McClung described the family's Ontario property as extremely rocky, writing that "the stones lay over our land like flocks of sheep."[8] McClung also eloquently recalled how a description of the superior quality of Manitoba's land by a visitor to Sullivan Township had captured the imagination of the district's young farmers:

> they could see the sea of grass and the friendly skies above it, and they could feel the intoxication of being the first to plant the seed in that mellow black loam, enriched by a million years of rain and sun.[9]

Inspired by this report and other accounts of farming in Manitoba, the eldest Mooney son Will moved to the province in 1879 and claimed a homestead, followed by the rest of the family one year later.

While the majority of Irish moving west were born in Canada, a comprehensive analysis of Irish migration from central and eastern Canada must take into account its immigrant as well as its intergenerational components. Irish immigrants previously resident in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime provinces came west as well, often with their Canadian-born Irish children. The relatively advanced age of Manitoba's Irish immigrant cohort, as revealed in the 1881 census, points to the importance of migration as a factor contributing to Irish-born population growth during the first decade of agricultural settlement. The age profile of the Irish-born population of Marquette, the largest rural census district in Manitoba, suggests a pattern completely different from the district's overall population, as well as from prevailing trends in late nineteenth-century Irish immigration (table 1). Fully 36.8 percent of the Irish-born residents of Marquette were aged fifty or older in 1881, compared to only 7.1 percent of the district's total population. Because the 1881 census did not collect data on year of immigration to Canada, it is impossible to determine with precision how many of these men and women had immigrated directly to Manitoba in the 1870s. Given the fact that the emigrant outflow from Ireland in the late nineteenth century was largely dominated by the young, however, these figures point to the importance of men like John Sanderson in the region's Irish population growth: immigrants long resident in Ontario or elsewhere in central and eastern Canada, moving west with their adult children.

Table 1 Age of population, Marquette census district, 1881 (percent)

Age	Irish Immigrants	Total District Population
< 20	5.6	53.2
20-29	14.7	20.4
30-39	20.7	11.8
40-49	22.1	7.5
50-59	17.7	4.1
60+	19.1	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Irish immigrant data from my counts, *Census of Canada*, 1881, Marquette census district (9). Data for overall population of the district taken from *Census of Canada*, 1881, vol. 2, Table 8, 132-47.

The subdistrict of Dufferin North, part of the Marquette census district, provides an excellent opportunity to examine Irish migration patterns in greater detail. Early arrivals, some of whom came west with the Wolseley expedition sent by the Canadian government to occupy Manitoba in the wake of the 1869-70 Red River resistance, established links in the area which attracted more Irish over the course of the next decade. By 1881, the Irish were the largest ethnic group in the area, comprising over one-third of its population (table 2). As with the rest of the region in the late nineteenth century, the Irish population of Dufferin North was dominated by the intergenerational group, with three-quarters of all Irish residents born in central and eastern Canada, predominantly Ontario (table 3). An additional fifteen Irish were from the United States, while seventy-three were children born to Irish parents in Manitoba. Eighty-one were Irish immigrants, but there are strong indications that many of them had lived elsewhere in North America before arriving in Dufferin North. For example, of the thirty-eight families with at least one Irish immigrant parent, thirty-six had children born in Ontario, Quebec or the United States, clearly indicating residence in that location prior to settlement in Manitoba.

Table 2 Ethnic origin of settlers in Dufferin North subdistrict, 1881

Group	Number	Percent
Irish	679	35.6
Scottish	508	26.6
English	497	26.0
French	116	6.1
German	53	2.8
Dutch	31	1.6
Other	24	1.3
Total	1908	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1881, Marquette census district (9), Dufferin North subdistrict (g-1 and g-2). 'Other' consists of Indian (15), Danish (5), Welsh (3) and Negro (1)

Table 3 Birthplace of Irish-origin settlers in Dufferin North subdistrict, 1881

Birthplace	Number	Percent
Ontario	435	64.1
Ireland	81	11.9
Manitoba	73	10.8
Quebec	71	10.5
United States	15	2.2
Atlantic Canada	3	0.4
Scotland	1	0.1
Total	679	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1881, Marquette census district (9), Dufferin North subdistrict (g-1 and g-2).

The age profile of Dufferin North's Irish population further points to the migration of older Irish immigrant parents with their Canadian-born children. The subdistrict was home to thirty-four Irish aged fifty or older; thirty of these were immigrants, twenty-three of whom lived with children born in North America. Further, the subdistrict was home to very few Irish immigrant minor children. Of the 328 Irish aged seventeen or younger in Dufferin North, 322 were born in North America, predominantly Ontario. Only six were born in Ireland, all of whom belonged to the Andrew and Elizabeth McDowell family. Data from Dufferin North thus conform to the general patterns detected among the Irish-born population in the overall Marquette census district; namely, a sizeable number of immigrants who had originally settled in central British North America and subsequently moved west when the region opened for agricultural settlement.

While census data suggest the importance and composition of migration in the area's Irish settlement, they shed little insight into the specific processes by which this population movement occurred. Local histories, however, point to the importance of chain migration as a factor contributing to Irish settlement in Dufferin North, particularly during the first decade of agricultural settlement. The connections among the Kennedy, Sexsmith and McCullough families, all of whom migrated from Ontario to Dufferin North in the 1870s, point to the importance of chain migration and family connections as factors contributing to Irish settlement. Samuel Kennedy was born in County Down in 1825 and immigrated to Upper Canada with his parents and siblings in the late 1830s. He married Jane Sexsmith, herself an Irish immigrant from County Kilkenny, and together they raised eight children in Napanee, Canada

West. Kennedy came to the Prairie West with the Wolseley expedition in 1870 and was among the first Ontario settlers to claim land in the area, bringing the rest of his family to Manitoba in 1871. Samuel and Jane Kennedy's home subsequently became a transitional residence for several other migrants moving to the area from Ontario, beginning with Samuel's half brother George Sexsmith and his wife Flora in 1872. Jane Kennedy's younger sisters Olivia and Margaret would follow with their Irish immigrant husbands Alex and John McCullough and their Ontario-born children in 1873-74, all of whom lived for a time in the Kennedy household before settling on their own homesteads. The arrival of the McCullough brothers in turn drew several more migrants from Ontario by 1881, including their brother Henry, their sister Margaret, their niece Georgiana and their nephew Nelson. A minimum of thirty-three Irish settled in Dufferin North in the space of a decade through the connections among the Kennedy, Sexsmith and McCullough families, laying the early foundation of a sizeable Irish presence in the district.[10]

The Manitoba settlement frontier offered the Irish families who settled in Dufferin North landowning opportunities unavailable in Ontario. The Kennedy family is a case in point, with Samuel and his sons acquiring seven contiguous quarter sections of land through a combination of homesteading, purchase and military grant, the latter a result of Samuel's participation in the Wolseley Expedition. Within a decade, the Kennedy family owned over one thousand acres of land in the Dufferin North area.[11] A second example comes from William John Brown, who was born in County Down in 1826 and immigrated to British North America at the height of the Great Famine in 1847. Brown settled in Canada West and married Canadian-born

Irishwoman Jane Burdette, with whom he raised a family of seven sons and four daughters. Faced with limited prospects in Ontario by the early 1870s, Brown "looked to the Canadian West as a land of hope and opportunity" and moved his family to Manitoba in 1877, claiming a homestead and later preempting the adjacent quarter section. Brown's five eldest sons acquired land in the same vicinity through homesteading or sale between 1877 and 1882, and his four daughters, after they married, also settled permanently in the area.[12] His two youngest sons, who were only five and three years old when the family moved to Manitoba, found no landowning opportunities in Dufferin North by the time they reached adulthood and chose to migrate to an unspecified location further west in the 1890s.[13] A final example comes from the family of Richard McKnight, who was born in County Down in 1824 and immigrated to Upper Canada at the age of eight. McKnight married in 1854 and with his wife Matilda raised a family of seven children in Canada West. The couple and six of their children moved west in 1879 at the recommendation of a family friend already resident in Manitoba. After preempting the quarter next to his homestead and purchasing two additional quarter sections, McKnight owned 640 acres of land. As his sons came of age in the early 1880s, he divided his original homestead in half and transferred ownership of eighty acres to each of his eldest sons Thomas and William, while also renting to them the two purchased quarter sections. The youngest McKnight sons migrated out of Manitoba as they reached adulthood: Franklin moved to North Dakota, while Smith relocated to Leslie in the North-West Territories. The youngest daughter Charlotte married and moved west to British Columbia.[14] Dufferin's local histories do not specify when these three left Manitoba, but the 1881 census has them all living in Richard McKnight's home; Franklin, Smith and Charlotte were then eighteen, sixteen and fourteen years old respectively.

These examples illustrate the evolution of Dufferin North as an Irish settlement frontier in the 1870s and early 1880s. Arriving at the earliest stages of agricultural settlement in the area, Samuel Kennedy and his sons were able to acquire over one thousand aces of land next to each other. Migrating to the area in the late 1870s, William John Brown and most of his sons were able to acquire land, though the youngest were compelled to migrate further west. Settling in Dufferin North even later, the eldest sons of Richard McKnight acquired their land directly through their father, but their younger brothers had to go elsewhere. Dufferin North thus offered improved economic prospects to Ontario migrants, but the best opportunities went to the earliest arrivals when "free land" was plentiful. For those who reached adulthood in the mid-1880s and the 1890s, the Prairie settlement frontier had already moved further west.

Irish settlement in western Canada was a cultural as well as an economic phenomenon, with migrants at the forefront of what Cecil Houston and William Smyth have characterized as the "transfer of Irish-Canadian values" to the Prairie West through institutions such as the Orange Order.[15] The culture brought by Irish migrants to Dufferin North was decidedly Protestant, with only twelve Roman Catholic Irish resident in the subdistrict in 1881 (table 4). The three case-study subjects of migration to Dufferin North were all Protestant: Samuel Kennedy belonged to the Church of England, William John Brown was a devout Methodist, and Richard McKnight was an ordained Presbyterian elder, becoming the leader of the community's first Presbyterian congregation in 1883.[16] In addition, Brown and Kennedy were both members of Dufferin's first Orange lodge, L.O.L. 1490, which met on Kennedy's farm.[17] Indeed, Kennedy transferred his Orange identity to Dufferin's physical landscape by changing the name of the Rivière aux Isles de Bois, along which he settled, to the Boyne River, in commemoration of the famous victory won by the Protestant forces of King William of Orange in Ireland in 1690.[18] Whether or not McKnight was also an Orangeman is unclear, but he certainly took an active role in the associational life of the subdistrict, serving as one of the first directors of the Dufferin Agricultural Society between 1882 and 1885 and subsequently as director of the Dufferin Farmers' Institute in 1891.[19] Many of Dufferin North's Irish migrants were at the forefront of constructing a society and culture on the Manitoba settlement frontier that was emphatically Protestant and loyalist, in many respects a reflection of the Ontario culture they left behind.

Table 4 Religion of the Irish-origin population, Dufferin North subdistrict, 1881

Religion	Number	Percent
Methodist	291	42.8
Church of England	233	34.3
Presbyterian	133	19.6
Roman Catholic	12	1.7
Baptist	6	0.9
Bible Christian	4	0.6
Total	679	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1881, Marquette census district (9), Dufferin North subdistrict (g-1 and g-2).

Migration thus laid the foundation of the rural Irish presence in late nineteenth-century western Canada. This presence was reinforced by direct immigration from Ireland. Although never forming more than a minority of Irish settlers in the region, Irish immigrants were actively sought by a Dominion government that viewed with favour the potential contributions to western development of Irish investment capital, agricultural skill and labour power. Ottawa thus made an effort to increase Canada's profile in Ireland through the work of the Department of Agriculture, which was responsible for immigration between 1867 and 1893. The department aggressively promoted western Canada as the most suitable field for Irish immigration and settlement in North America through agents stationed in Cork (1874-75), Limerick (1876-78), Dublin (1867-94) and Belfast (1867-94). They were part of a larger campaign which saw Canadian representatives sent to cities throughout the United Kingdom and temporary agents hired to promote Canada on an ad hoc basis during personal and business trips to Ireland. The department also brought over Irish farmer delegates to tour the Prairie West and report on their impressions of the climate, markets and agricultural potential of the region, which were then printed for distribution in Ireland.[20] As might be expected, the reports were overwhelmingly positive and advertised western Canada as a land of tremendous opportunity.

Responsibility for immigration was transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1893, which promptly imposed cutbacks on overseas promotional work in Ireland. Pointing to the minimal number of Irish immigrants who had taken up homesteads in the early 1890s, the department closed its only remaining offices in Belfast and Dublin in 1894 and confined its activity to a limited number of advertisements in Irish newspapers.[21] This setback proved temporary, however, and immigration work in Ireland was rejuvenated by the appointment of Clifford Sifton as minister of the interior in 1896. The new minister expanded promotional work not only throughout the United Kingdom, including Ireland, but also into the United States and previously untapped sources in eastern Europe.[22] Historian and Sifton biographer David Hall has characterized the minister's attitude towards immigration from Ireland as somewhat indifferent, arguing that Sifton did not view Ireland as a likely source for agricultural settlers.[23] While he was perhaps less impressed with the immigration potential of Ireland than with that England or Scotland, Sifton's reforms nonetheless brought with them a renewed commitment to active promotional work in the country. The Dublin office was reopened in 1897, the same year that a new office was opened in Londonderry to direct immigration work in Ulster. In addition, the advertising budget for promotional work in Ireland steadily increased, from $1,500 in 1895-96 to $4,500 by 1900-01, and it would continue to grow in the early twentieth century.[24]

Like their counterparts stationed elsewhere in the British Isles, Canadian agents in Ireland were instructed to focus their recruitment efforts on those classes for which demand was greatest in western Canada: experienced farmers, preferably those with investment capital, as well as domestic servants and agricultural labourers. The annual reports submitted by immigration agents working in Ireland reflect this mandate. In his 1876 annual report, for example, Cork agent J.S. Talbot noted that he had exercised due caution as to which classes of people he advised to immigrate; the following year Dublin agent J.S. Larkin reported that he had followed strict instructions not to encourage any individuals who did not fit into the Canadian government's three preferred categories.[25] Belfast agent Charles Foy also stressed in

1876 that he had made the quality rather than the number of immigrants his priority, actively discouraging Irish tradesmen likely to gravitate to Ontario's urban centres and experience difficulty securing employment during the current downturn in the Canadian economy.[26] Annual reports from Canadian agents in the 1880s and beyond continued to emphasize the selectivity of immigration recruitment in Ireland.

Canadian efforts to attract Irish immigrants for Prairie settlement were seemingly well timed as broad transformations in land ownership, inheritance patterns and the class structure of rural Ireland ensured that mass emigration would continue in the decades after the Great Famine. The most important development in the post-Famine period contributing to the widespread pressure towards emigration was the increased consolidation of land ownership in the hands of large-scale commercial farmers. The death or emigration of millions during the Famine decade presented Ireland's wealthiest landowners with the opportunity to expand their holdings and convert land previously used for subsistence farming to commercial agriculture, especially cattle and sheep farming. Millions of acres were transformed from tillage to pasture in the 1860s and 1870s so that by 1881, over eighty percent of Irish agricultural land was devoted to raising livestock.[27]

The Great Famine thus accelerated the commercialization and modernization of Irish agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century. The material benefits of that process, however, fell primarily to the wealthiest farmers who had the capital to expand their holdings in the 1850s and 1860s. For the majority of Irish agriculturalists, who continued to operate farms less than thirty acres in size, the economic realities of late nineteenth-century Ireland were often harsh.[28] Middling farmers, who occupied between ten and thirty acres, found it increasingly difficult to compete with larger operations in Ireland and elsewhere in the United Kingdom, while the most impoverished peasant farmers, concentrated primarily in western Ireland, subsisted on less than ten acres of land. The most important social consequence of this reorientation of agriculture in favour of wealthy landowners was a fundamental transformation of inheritance and marriage patterns, especially among middling and peasant farmers.[29] Prior to the Famine, the dominant system was one of partible inheritance, with land typically divided up and transferred to children upon their marriage rather than passing intact to the eldest son. The post-Famine consolidation of land among fewer farmers, however, created a scarcity that rendered the existing system untenable as smaller landholders became increasingly hesitant to subdivide their land.[30] Land was increasingly transferred whole to a single child rather than split up among multiple heirs, leaving millions of young men faced with the prospect of not inheriting any land at all. This development, in turn, altered traditional patterns of marriage. With only one child per family inheriting sufficient land to raise a family in post-Famine Ireland, fewer Irish men and women married, and those who could did so much later in life. The marriage rate fell by nearly one-half, from 7.0 per 1,000 in 1845 to an average of 4.7 per 1,000 between 1870 and 1900, to become the lowest rate in Europe by the turn of the twentieth century.[31] Matrimony increasingly became an economic rather than a romantic partnership as the practice of arranged marriage, once the exclusive domain of the wealthy classes, was increasingly adopted by middling and peasant farmers across rural Ireland in the late nineteenth century.[32]

In addition to reducing marriage and landowning prospects, changes in the economy also constricted other opportunities for young men and women. The mechanization of agriculture reduced demand for farm labourers not only in Ireland but also in Great Britain, where thousands of Irish men had migrated annually as harvest workers. Simultaneously, Irish women faced diminished wage-earning prospects as a result of changes to textile production. Linen-weaving, a crucial source of supplementary income for many Irish families, virtually disappeared from the Irish countryside as textile manufacturing increasingly moved into factories that were concentrated in Ireland's more industrial north, especially Belfast and Londonderry.[33]

Collectively, the above factors acted as a powerful stimulus for the emigration of hundreds of thousands of young Irish men and women in the second half of the nineteenth century. The situation was exacerbated by a severe political and economic crisis that hit parts of Ireland in the early 1880s. The potato crop failed virtually every year between 1879 and 1886, and though swift government intervention prevented a catastrophe on the scale of the Great Famine, the crop failures had a devastating impact on those remaining peasant farmers, particularly in the western province of Connacht, who still depended heavily on potato cultivation.[34] The same period also saw a sharp rise in the number of peasants evicted by their landlords. While 4,600 peasants were evicted in 1878, the number had multiplied almost six-fold by 1882, when landlords evicted 26,800 people. In all, a total of 132,000 peasants were evicted between 1878 and 1886.[35] These conditions manifested in growing political support for the reform-minded Irish National Land League, as well as in direct violent retribution against landlords in the Land War of 1879 to 1882.

The resulting surge in Irish emigration in the 1880s saw nearly 735,000 Irish leave their homeland, an increase of some 200,000 from the previous decade. This trend was evident in Irish immigration totals to Canada, with 44,505 individuals arriving during the 1880s, compared with 25,783 in the 1870s.[36]

Thus, long term social and economic changes, combined with the acute crisis of the early 1880s, combined to sustain large-scale emigration from Ireland in the decades after the Great Famine. Falling agricultural prices and agrarian unrest compelled many wealthy farmers to sell their holdings and seek new opportunities abroad, while land scarcity, declining marriage prospects and reduced wage-earning opportunities pushed the sons and daughters of middling farmers to emigrate. At the same time, crop failure and mass eviction drove the emigration of hundreds of thousands of the most impoverished peasant farmers, especially from western Ireland, who had been living a precarious existence either renting small plots of land or having no access to land at all.

Canadian efforts to attract Irish immigrants for Prairie settlement, however, yielded disappointing results in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, as the overwhelming majority of transatlantic Irish immigrants went to the United States. Between 1870 and 1900, 1,503,454 Irish immigrated to America and a mere 80,936 to Canada.[37] Four key factors contributed to Canada's failure to attract a greater share of the post-Famine exodus. First, late nineteenth-century Irish emigration followed well-established linkages which strongly favoured the United States as the primary destination for Irish immigrants. During the Great Famine, emigration from the provinces of Munster and Connacht had been directed overwhelmingly to the United

States, setting in motion a process of chain migration that continued to draw the majority of emigrants in subsequent decades. From 1876 (the first year in which data on the provincial origin of emigrants was collected) through 1900, 33.6 percent of all Irish emigrants originated in Munster and a further 21.1 percent in Connacht (table 5). Emigration from both provinces was heaviest from the Atlantic seaboard, with over half of emigrants originating from the Munster counties of Kerry, Cork and Clare, and the Connacht counties of Galway and Mayo, all of which had strong links to the United States.[38] Canada had few historic immigration ties with either Munster or Connacht, illustrated by the fact that only 31.4 percent of Irish emigrants choosing Canada between 1876 and 1900 originated in those two provinces. Even in the early 1880s, when post-Famine emigration from Munster and Connacht peaked as a result of the Land War and agricultural crisis, Canada's totals were dwarfed by those of the United States. In 1883, for example, Canada received 4,353 immigrants from Connacht and 1,741 from Munster, the highest total for both provinces in the post-Famine period. By contrast, in that year the United States attracted 18,032 and 21,167 immigrants from Connacht and Munster respectively.[39] With emigration driven largely by chain migration links established in the mid-nineteenth century, efforts by the Canadian government to attract a greater proportion of the Irish emigrant outflow went strongly against the grain of existing immigration linkages.

Table 5 Provincial origin of Irish emigrants, 1876-1900 (percent)

Province	Overall Irish Emigration	Irish Immigration to Canada
Munster	33.6	14.4
Ulster	29.8	57.3
Connacht	21.1	16.7
Leinster	16.4	11.5

Source: W.E. Vaughan and A.J. Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1978), 246.

Second, these regional patterns which favoured the United States were reinforced by the sectarian dimensions of late nineteenth-century Irish emigration. Though precise data on the religion of emigrants are not available, the outflow was certainly dominated by Roman Catholics. In his seminal 1985 study *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, historian Kerby Miller estimates that a minimum of eighty percent of those leaving Ireland's shores in the post-Famine period (1856-1921) were Roman Catholic. While Canada's political and cultural links to Great Britain acted as a magnet for Irish Protestants, Roman Catholics often had little inclination to immigrate to a destination within the British Empire.[40] Roman Catholics dominated the outflow not only in the overwhelmingly Catholic provinces of Munster and Connacht, but also in Ulster, the province from which Canada had traditionally drawn the majority of its Irish immigrants.[41] While Catholics comprised a slim minority of Ulster's population in the late nineteenth century (47.8 percent in 1871), emigration from that province was driven by Catholics, and a large majority of Ulster emigrants chose America over Canada. Between 1876 and 1900, 245,340 Irish left Ulster for the United States; Canada, despite its historic immigration links with the province, attracted only 29,740 individuals.[42]

Third, Canadian efforts to attract an increased share of Irish emigration were challenged by a vocal anti-emigration campaign, dominated by the Roman Catholic clergy and Irish nationalists, which emerged in the late nineteenth century.[43] This movement countered efforts to promote western Canada as an ideal field for Irish settlement with a propaganda campaign that portrayed the region as an arctic wilderness populated by "rampant" and intolerant Protestants. An editorial in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal*, one of Ireland's leading nationalist organs, warned potential emigrants in 1883 that they would face "Canadian snows and Red Indian wilds" in Manitoba.[44] This hostility continued into the 1890s, when the reopening of Canada's immigration office in Dublin in 1897 stimulated a major nationalist backlash. The *Killkenny Journal* and *Munster News* both declared that emigration to Siberia was preferable to the inhospitable climate of western Canada, while the Dublin-based *The Nation* warned potential emigrants not to be lured into a "Manitoba exile scheme" that would condemn them to life in a "barren and ice-bound land." [45]

While the overall impact of this anti-emigration movement cannot be quantified, many of Canada's agents, particularly those based outside of Ulster, complained that it hindered their work. Dublin agent J.G. Moylan reported a "great disinclination towards settlement in Canada" and noted that any open effort to recruit settlers was met with resistance from the anti-emigration movement.[46] Cork agent J.S. Talbot reported that "lamentable ignorance prevail[ed] regarding Canada" in southern Ireland, while Limerick agent J. Murphy found that his efforts to promote immigration to Canada were "oftentimes rejected in no very polite terms."[47] Thomas Connolly, appointed to the Dublin office in 1880, reported to Prime Minister John A. Macdonald that discretion was paramount in his work, lest he "provoke the hostility of the popular press and the national party." Connolly went so far as to suggest in 1882 that he risked being "classed an exterminator of the Irish people" by nationalists as a result of his work.[48]

Fourth, while Canada enjoyed an advantage over the United States in recruiting Protestant settlers who wished to remain under the British flag, it faced strong competition from Australia and New Zealand.[49] Ottawa offered subsidized fares to agricultural workers and domestic servants from the United Kingdom in its effort to address Canada's pressing labour needs between 1872 and 1888, but it refused to finance such a program for settlers.[50] In contrast, the government of New Zealand provided financial assistance to immigrants from the United Kingdom, including an estimated twenty-five to thirty thousand Irish, between 1870 and 1880. An additional four thousand Irish Protestants from Ulster immigrated to New Zealand between 1875 and 1885 as part of a private colonization effort financed by Irish gentleman landowner George Vesey Stewart.[51] Belfast immigration agent Charles Foy made specific reference to the Stewart colony in his 1876 annual report as having attracted immigrants who, in his estimation, would otherwise likely have gone to Canada.[52] The Australian colonies financed over one dozen assisted British immigration and colonization schemes, most of which were active between 1856 and the early 1890s.[53] Canada's immigration agents complained on several occasions that Ottawa's refusal to provide free passages made it impossible for them to compete with their counterparts from the Australasian colonies, leading to some questionable tactics. For example, a clearly frustrated Foy attempted, with little apparent success, to deter potential emigrants to New Zealand in the 1870s by warning them of the likelihood of Maori attacks on white settlements.[54] Free passage played an important role shaping emigration patterns during this period, with 128,870 Irish immigrating to Australia and New Zealand between 1870 and 1900, nearly half of whom (61,946) arrived during the peak period of assisted immigration for Australasia between 1870 and 1880.[55]

Collectively, these four factors worked to undermine Canadian efforts to attract Irish immigrants to the Prairie West. The region was opened for agricultural settlement at a time of high emigration from Ireland, but historic emigration links, coupled with the predominantly Roman Catholic composition of the outflow, directed the majority of Irish to the United States. Assisted passages made agricultural settlement in the Australasian colonies more attractive than western Canada for those emigrating within the British Empire, while Irish nationalists specifically targeted the Prairie West as an undesirable destination. Despite meagre overall numbers, however, Canadian efforts to attract Irish immigrants in the late nineteenth century were not without success. The Dominion government's hope of drawing Irish agriculturalists with investment capital to the Prairie West, for example, was at least partially realized in the settlement of two areas: Whitewood, located in Assiniboia East, and Macleod in southwestern Alberta (tables 6 and 7). Irish settlement in Whitewood and Macleod shared some common features. For example, a majority of Irish immigrants in both communities were Protestant, reflecting broader religious distinctions in their larger subdistricts. Irish Catholic immigrants were more prominent in Macleod than Whitewood, though Protestants still comprised two-thirds of Macleod's Irish-born population. Further, Irish settlement in both communities had an elitist character, with the core Irish immigrant presence consisting of emigrant gentlemen farmers, clergymen, and the sons of gentry. The two settlements, however, were the product of different processes.

Table 6 Irish-born residents of Broadview subdistrict and Broadview subdivision by religion, 1891

Religion	Broadview subdistrict (A)	Percent	Broadview subdivision (A11)	Percent
Anglican	185	45.7	31	70.0
Presbyterian	114	28.1	9	19.1
Methodist	61	15.1	3	6.4
Roman Catholic	30	7.4	4	8.5
Baptist	6	1.5	0	0
Other	9	2.2	0	0
Total	405	100.0	47	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1891, Assiniboia East census district (198), Broadview subdistrict (A) and Broadview subdivision (A11). Whitewood was located in subdivision A11. For the Broadview subdistrict, the Anglican total includes two people listed as belonging to the Church of Ireland; the Baptist total includes one person listed as a freewill Baptist; and 'Other' total consists of Moravian (7), Plymouth Brethren (1), and Salvation Army (1).

Table 7 Irish-born residents of Macleod subdistrict and Macleod subdivision by religion, 1891

Religion	Macleod subdistrict (C)	Percent	Macleod subdivision (C3)	Percent
Anglican	45	48.9	34	51.5
Roman Catholic	31	33.7	33	33.3
Presbyterian	9	9.8	6	9.1
Methodist	7	7.6	4	6.1
Total	92	100.0	66	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1891, Alberta census district (197), Macleod subdistrict (C) and Macleod subdivision (C3). As this is an enumeration of rural areas, the subdivision of Lethbridge (C1) was excluded from the total for the Macleod subdistrict.

While the Irish presence in Whitewood emerged out of the typical forces driving immigration and rural settlement, the origin of the Irish in Macleod was more distinct, inexorably linked to an Irish presence in the North-West Mounted Police. Irish men were among the dozens of recruits who settled in Macleod in the late nineteenth century after their discharge from the force. Former policemen took a leading role in the social, political and economic life of Macleod, ensuring that the Irish would be well represented among the area's most prominent citizens.

The Whitewood example illustrates two important features of late nineteenth-century Irish immigration to the Prairie West, the first of which was the importance of kinship and acquaintance connections in drawing Irish settlement to a particular location. It is unclear whether or not extended family relationships through marriage, such as those which sustained Irish migration to Dufferin North, were at work in Whitewood. At the very least, there are strong indications that the success of early Irish arrivals drew the attention of acquaintances back home who sought information on the area with an eye to immigrating. Second, the Whitewood example points to the role played by Canada's representatives in Ireland, in this case Dublin agent Thomas Connolly, in the immigration and settlement process. Immigration to Whitewood developed a momentum of its own, with wealthy farmers attracted by the opportunities available in the Prairie West, and was not merely the product of Connolly's promotional work. At the same time, the Dublin agent clearly played an active role providing information to potential settlers and assisting others to immigrate to the district.

Among the first Irish settlers in the district were Francis and Augusta Cosgrave, who immigrated with their eight children from County Dublin in 1882.[56] Cosgrave arrived with enough capital to purchase Canadian Pacific Railway land near Whitewood and was joined two years later by his brother Thomas, an Anglican clergyman from County Sligo, who immigrated with six other Irish families.[57] Within a few years, the brothers owned eight hundred acres of land, a sign of the early success of the settlement that acted as a magnet for further immigration. Thomas agreed to locate good land for another Irish farmer who wanted to join the settlement, while other prospective residents traveled to Whitewood to evaluate its potential first hand. For example, a gentleman farmer named Richard W.J. Jones of County Sligo visited the community for several months in 1886, staying at the home of Thomas Cosgrove.[58] Jones reported in a letter to Dublin immigration agent Thomas Connolly that he was deeply impressed with the peace, order, climate and agricultural bounty of the settlement,[59] but the available evidence cannot confirm whether or not Jones subsequently immigrated to Whitewood. The community continued to draw new Irish immigrants, however, and by 1891, the area was home to forty-eight Irish-born residents.[60]

The Cosgrave brothers maintained a correspondence with Connolly, some portions of which were included in the agent's annual reports to the Department of Agriculture. With Connolly selectively choosing which letters to include in these reports, the extent to which they reflect the level of involvement he typically had in the immigration process is unclear. Nonetheless, they point to the varied roles he played in attracting and directing Irish settlement to the district. For example, Francis Cosgrave specifically mentioned two men named Jones whom the agent had sent to Whitewood, possibly as agricultural labourers, and also made note of the arrival of two young men named Aungur and Cusack; though Cosgrave did not specify whether Connolly himself had sent the duo to the settlement, the fact that they were singled out for mention is suggestive.[61] Connolly clearly played some role in the relocation of Thomas Cosgrove, who thanked the agent in a November 1885 letter for unspecified "judicious arrangements" that he had made in organizing the clergyman's move to Whitewood. Further, Connolly continued to act as an important source of information for others considering immigration to the Prairie West. For example, at the request of Thomas Cosgrove, Connolly visited Lissadell, County Sligo, in 1886 to deliver a lecture on western Canada, which, according to the agent, convinced sixty to seventy more persons to leave their homeland for Manitoba and the North-West Territories.[62]

Further west, immigration also contributed to the development of a unique Irish presence near Macleod in southwestern Alberta. The earliest Irish settlers in the area were predominantly recent immigrants who traveled west with the North-West Mounted Police in the 1870s, many of whom took up ranching after their discharge from the force. These men became the core of what evolved into a very strong Irish immigrant presence in the local ranching industry in the 1880s, as illustrated by information from the 1891 census. The Macleod subdistrict, covering all of southwestern Alberta, was broken into three subdivisions centred around Lethbridge (C1), Pincher Creek (C2) and Fort Macleod (C3). The data reveal that while outnumbered by American- and English-born ranchers in the Lethbridge and Pincher Creek subdivisions, the Irish had the largest immigrant presence among ranchers nearest Fort Macleod in the Macleod subdivision, where they almost equaled in number those born in Ontario (table 8). [63]

Five men in particular, all of whom had arrived with the North-West Mounted Police in the 1870s, had established sizeable ranches by the mid-1880s. The first to acquire land was James W. Bell, who was born in County Cavan in 1852 and immigrated to Canada at the age of twenty. He came west with the force in 1874 and after leaving it, entered into a business partnership with the second Irish immigrant,

Table 8 Birthplace of ranchers, subdivisions within Macleod subdistrict, 1891

Birthplace	Lethbridge (C1)	Pincher Creek (C2)	Fort Macleod (C3)	Total
United States	16	15	9	40
Ontario	5	16	17	38
England	9	15	9	33
Ireland	2	8	14	24
Quebec	1	17	5	23
Scotland	1	7	5	13
Atlantic Canada	1	6	0	7
Germany	0	4	2	6
N-W Territories	0	3	1	4
Other	1	5	0	6
Total	36	96	62	194

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1891, Macleod subdistrict. 'Other' consists of Holland (1), South Africa (2), New Zealand (1), Greece (1) and India (1).

Robert Patterson. By 1884, the pair was leasing 6,000 acres for their ranching operation.[64] The third individual was Michael Gallagher, who immigrated to Canada from County Mayo in 1872. After spending three years working for the Ottawa city police force, Gallagher joined the North-West Mounted Police and came to Macleod. He began ranching after his discharge from the force in the late 1870s and was leasing 6,500 acres of land in 1884.[65] The most important members of this group, however, were the brothers Edward and George Maunsell, who immigrated to Canada from County Limerick and joined the North-West Mounted Police in the mid-1870s. They were joined by their brother Harry in 1881 and together the three men launched a ranching enterprise that was by 1884 comparable in size to those of Patterson, Bell and Gallagher, with the Maunsells leasing 6,500 acres of land. George left the partnership in 1887 to pursue his own business interests but Edward and Harry's Ivy

Ranch continued to expand and by the early twentieth century, the brothers were leasing 300,000 acres for their operation.[66]

These early Irish arrivals possessed or established links that drew other Irish to the district, starting with the men's wives. Of the aforementioned ranchers, only Bell did not marry an Irish-born woman. Gallagher married Helen Macdonald, an immigrant from County Cork, in Ottawa before he came west, while Patterson travelled back to Ireland to marry his wife Lucinda in 1883.[67] George and Edward Maunsell returned to Ireland in the mid-1880s to wed their respective wives Isabella and Jeanette; Edward and Jeanette were joined on their trip back to Macleod in 1886 by brother Harry's betrothed, Mary Townley.[68] Available evidence cannot confirm whether or not either Patterson or any of the Maunsell brothers were engaged prior to their arrival in Canada or if their marriages were arranged upon their visits to Ireland in the 1880s. The fact that the men had looked to the homeland for wives may have reflected the dearth of prospective brides locally. Complaining about the lack of marriage partners in early Macleod, for example, one resident estimated that in 1884 there were no more than four unwed white women in the district.[69] While his figure was perhaps an exaggeration, Anglo-Celtic men certainly outnumbered their female counterparts by a wide margin in the early years of Alberta settlement, and the practice of Irish immigrants returning home to marry appears to have declined among those arriving later in the nineteenth century. In some cases, returning home to marry may have reflected the men's upper class backgrounds. Typical of North-West Mounted Police recruits in the late nineteenth century, for example, Patterson and the Maunsell brothers appear to have come from prominent families.[70] Patterson was educated at Killkenny College, suggesting a relatively high social background, and sent his eldest daughter, Sue, back to Ireland for finishing school.[71] For their part, the Maunsell family was described in an early twentieth-century biography of Edward as "old and honored" in Ireland.[72]

In addition to marriage partners, the extensive ranching enterprise of the Maunsell brothers drew numerous other Irish immigrants to the Macleod area. For example, William Atkins, whose education at Trinity College, Dublin, also suggests an elite social background, immigrated directly to Macleod in 1893 as a result of his acquaintance with the Maunsell family in Ireland. He worked for a time on the brothers' ranch before settling on his own land in the district, living with his wife and two children south of Macleod by 1901. Atkins was followed in 1895 by his friend John Metge from Athlone, County Westmeath, who immigrated to Macleod to "make his fortune and restore the [family] estate," which was in financial trouble. John would later be joined by his younger brothers, Bertie and Harry.[73] The Maunsells were joined in 1897 by their nephew Alexander Beere, also from County Limerick, who worked on the Cow Camp established on land leased by the brothers from the local Piegan Indian Reserve. A second nephew, Gerald Beere, also immigrated and settled in the Macleod area.[74]

The example of the Maunsell family underlines the importance of kinship and acquaintance connections as a crucial factor behind Irish population growth in Macleod in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The North-West Mounted Police also remained an important source of Irish immigrant settlers in this period, with policemen still choosing to settle permanently in the district after their discharge from the force in the 1880s and 1890s. Two examples point to the continued importance of this connection. Gordon Mathews, born in Dublin in 1867 and educated at the Shakespeare Grammar School in Stratford-on-Avon, England, immigrated to Canada to join the North-West Mounted Police at the age of eighteen. Sent to Fort Macleod in 1889, he remained in the district after his retirement from the force in the early 1890s.[75] Christopher Hilliard of Eniskillen, County Fermanagh, immigrated to Canada in 1880 at the age of fifteen to work for a relative in Toronto. He joined the North-West Mounted Police two years later and was sent west, seeing active service during the North-West Rebellion in 1885. He was stationed at Standoff in southern Alberta before settling south of Fort Macleod in the early twentieth century.[76] Unlike some of the earlier arrivals, neither Mathews nor Hilliard returned to Ireland to wed; rather, both men married Canadian-born women in 1899 with strong connections to the North-West Mounted Police. Mathews wedded Clare Casey of Colborne, Ontario, whose father had joined the force and moved to Alberta in 1886, while Hilliard married Corinne de Bellefeulle, cousin of former North-West Mounted Police superintendent Sam Steele. The contrast with Patterson and the Maunsell brothers, who sought marriage partners in the Irish homeland, is notable, and suggests that by the late 1890s, the North-West Mounted Police provided a social circle from within which former members of the force could find marriage partners of a suitably high standing.

Migration also contributed to Irish settlement in Macleod. As had been the case in Dufferin North, immigrant and Canadian-born Irish moved west in search of economic opportunity after years of residence in central and eastern Canada. Perhaps the most roundabout route was taken by the well-travelled family of John and Ann Ryan of Callan, County Kilkenny. The first member of the family to arrive in Canada was eldest son Charles, born in India during his father's service in the British army, who immigrated to Quebec in 1870. Charles joined the North-West Mounted Police four years later, moving west with the force to Fort Macleod where he settled permanently. The rest of the family, who had gone to Quebec in 1872, settled at Macleod in 1883. Charles reinforced the Irishness of the family circle, marrying Bridget Meagher, who immigrated to Macleod from County Tipperary in 1887.[77] David Johnson Grier was born to an Irish immigrant father and Ontario-born mother near Owen Sound, Ontario. He joined the North-West Mounted Police and came west to Fort Macleod in 1877. David served in the force for three years, after which time he entered into a ranching and farming partnership with his brother, Curran, who had moved west in 1882. One year later, the brothers were joined in Macleod by their parents, James and Mary, and their sister, Jennie.[78] A final prominent Irish migrant family is that of James and Elizabeth McNab, who immigrated with their four sons to the Ottawa Valley from Ballinrobe, County Clare, in 1869. The eldest son, Jack, eventually moved to Winnipeg where he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway, while two other brothers, Robert and William, left the family's home for Macleod in 1883. Their parents and youngest brother Joseph followed later that year, and by 1901, the family owned over 1,300 acres of land.[79] The family acted as a link for further direct immigration from Ireland, as Elizabeth's sister Maria Burgess, and her seven-year-old-daughter Letetia, moved to Macleod from County Mayo in 1888.[80]

The examples of Macleod and Whitewood are both representative of the type of Irish immigration that the Dominion government most welcomed in western Canada. The core Irish presence in each community arrived with money to invest in land, and, in the case of Macleod, in substantial livestock holdings. The principle figures in these case studies, Francis Cosgrave and the Maunsell brothers, became leading citizens in their respective districts. Cosgrave was appointed justice of the peace in the Whitewood district and served as foreman of the Riel jury after the 1885 Northwest Rebellion.[81] For their part, the Maunsell brothers ranked among the wealthiest ranchers in all of Alberta by the early twentieth century. The brothers dramatically increased their livestock holdings in 1906, purchasing ten thousand cattle from the dissolved Cochrane Ranch as well as five hundred from fellow Irish immigrant rancher Robert Patterson. The acquisitions brought the Maunsells' own livestock holdings to over seventeen thousand head of cattle, the largest herd in Alberta at the time.[82]

In addition to recruiting or encouraging individual settlers and workers, the Canadian government also gave serious consideration to plans for Irish Catholic colonization in the rural Prairie West. Though the individual homestead had been established as the ideal for Prairie settlement by the Dominion Lands Act of 1872, modifications had already been made in the 1870s to facilitate ethnic bloc settlement, most notably Mennonite and Icelandic colonies in Manitoba.[83] The idea of establishing an Irish colony in the Prairie West was first raised by Prime Minister John A. Macdonald after his election victory in 1878, and over the next several years, the Canadian and British governments negotiated the terms of a plan to establish an

Irish Catholic colony in Manitoba to be called New Ireland. By spring 1881, the two governments had agreed to a tentative plan whereby Britain would assume responsibility for selecting Irish colonists and paying the cost of their passage, and Canada would provide each immigrant with a 160-acre homestead, construct a dwelling and break a portion of the land in advance of the settlers' arrival.[84]

The British government welcomed the prospect of overseas Irish colonization as a means of alleviating population pressure and chronic disorder in rural Ireland, especially during the agricultural crisis and subsequent violence of the Land War in the late 1870s and early 1880s. On the Canadian side, support from the government came primarily from the prime minister who had several motives for promoting Irish colonization. Most critically, Irish bloc settlement in western Canada would contribute to the fulfillment of his ambitious national policy by attracting Prairie settlers, who, Macdonald anticipated, would work as wage labourers on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway in addition to settling down as agriculturalists.[85] Support for the New Ireland settlement was also part of a larger effort by the prime minister to solidify the loyalty of Irish Catholic voters in central Canada, especially Ontario. Support for the New Ireland settlement was intended as a visible example of Macdonald's attention to Irish Catholic concerns, as was his government's pledge of $100,000 in assistance to Ireland in 1880 after extensive crop failure once again raised the prospect of famine.[86] Finally, on a personal level, Macdonald appears to have viewed overseas colonization as the best means of alleviating chronic poverty and endemic disorder in rural Ireland. In the words of his biographer Donald Creighton, it was "a solution which would apply neither coercion nor concession," attractive to Macdonald because it offered an alternative to violent British suppression of the Land War without yielding to the demands of Irish nationalist agitators.[87]

In addition to the prime minister, the prospect of Irish colonization in western Canada won the support of two influential figures in the hierarchy of Canada's Roman Catholic Church. One was Archbishop Alexander-Antonin Taché of St. Boniface, who, frustrated in his attempts to attract French Catholic settlers to Manitoba in the 1870s, lent his support to the New Ireland scheme as a means of bolstering the Catholic presence in the province.[88] The other was Archbishop John Joseph Lynch of Toronto, whose support for the proposal represented an abrupt shift from his long-standing opposition to Irish Catholic immigration to Canada. Deeply scarred by his experience aiding Irish Famine refugees in Toronto in the 1850s, Lynch had campaigned actively against further Irish immigration to Canada from the time of his appointment as archbishop in 1860. He detailed his opposition in an 1864 pamphlet, *The Evils of Wholesale and Improvident Emigration from Ireland*, in which he expressed his concern that Irish Catholic immigrants would gravitate to urban slums where they would be "lost to morality, to society, to religion, and finally to God."[89] While opposing the New Ireland plan at the outset, Lynch changed his position once convinced that it would result in rural rather than urban settlement. The archbishop became one of scheme's most active supporters, touring Ireland in 1882 on behalf of the Canadian government in an effort to rally the support of Roman Catholic bishops.[90]

Though not specifically noted in the available evidence, the success of Irish Catholic colonization in Minnesota may also have contributed to the momentum in favour of similar efforts in western Canada. In 1864, Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul established the Minnesota Irish Emigration Society in an attempt to organize Irish Catholic colonization in the state. Though the society largely failed in its efforts, the archbishop remained committed to Irish Catholic colonization in Minnesota and launched another initiative in 1876, this time as leader of a new organization, the Catholic Colonization Bureau of St. Paul. This body acquired 379,000 acres of land in rural Minnesota between 1876 and 1879 for Irish Catholic settlement and while the scheme never met the lofty expectations of its patron, it managed to attract over three thousand Irish Catholics colonists, both from Ireland and the eastern United States, by 1880.[91] Though less successful than the Minnesota experience, smaller Irish Catholic colonies were also established in the 1870s in Nebraska, Kansas and Arkansas.[92]

While early negotiations on the New Ireland colony yielded promising results, the scheme collapsed as a result of events in both Canada and Ireland. John Costigan, a Conservative member of Parliament from New Brunswick, informed Macdonald in March 1882 of his intention to introduce a set of resolutions into the House of Commons calling upon the Canadian government to endorse Irish Home Rule. Unwilling to risk alienating Irish Catholic voters in Canada during an election year, Macdonald agreed to support such a move, provided that Costigan accept a milder version of the resolutions, devoid of any hint of anti-British rhetoric.[93] The timing of the move, however, was extraordinarily bad for Macdonald as less than three weeks after the House of Commons passed the Home Rule resolution, a hitherto unknown group of Irish militants known as the Irish National Invincibles murdered the newly appointed chief secretary for Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, and Dublin Castle undersecretary Thomas Henry Burke in Phoenix Park, Dublin. In the wake of the murders, the British government withdrew its support for the New Ireland settlement and sharply rebuked the Canadian government for its ill-timed endorsement of Irish Home Rule.[94]

Continued unrest in Ireland nonetheless forced the British government to persist in exploring overseas colonization options, prompting London to respond favourably to an ambitious scheme proposed by George Stephen of the North West Land Company in 1883. Stephen, a close associate of the Canadian prime minister, suggested that Britain finance the organization and transport of 10,000 Irish families to western Canada; in return, the North West Land Company would provide each family with 160 acres of land, a dwelling, a cow and other unspecified agricultural help. The immigrants would then repay the cost of their passage and other assistance within two years.[95] In this case, London proved willing to advance the necessary capital in the form of an interest-free loan of one million pounds, but would only do so if the Canadian government was prepared to collect the repayments from the settlers. Ottawa refused to assume this administrative responsibility, and the proposal collapsed in late 1883.[96]

Despite these setbacks, the Canadian government continued to explore the possibility of Irish group settlement in western Canada. The Department of Agriculture commissioned Rev. John J. Coffey of London, Ontario, to visit the Prairie

West in 1885 in order to evaluate its potential for Irish colonization. Coffey also toured Minnesota and Nebraska to examine the success of Irish Catholic settlements in those states and provide insight into the reasons why the American Midwest attracted more Irish Catholic settlers than western Canada. His final report pointed to the superior organization of American Irish Catholics into colonization societies, as well as to negative perceptions among Irish Catholic immigrants about the harsh environment of the Canadian Prairie West. Coffey declared his conviction that western Canada was a more promising field for Irish Catholic immigration than the western United States, though his investigations did not result in any new concrete proposals.[97]

Prospects for Irish colonization in western Canada, however, waned by the early 1890s. The British government briefly considered funding more overseas colonization and assisted emigration after the creation of the Congested Districts Board in 1891 to direct agricultural modernization and other programs, including assisted emigration, aimed at alleviating chronic poverty in western Ireland.[98] The board dispatched one of its leading members, Horace Plunkett, to Canada that same year to investigate the feasibility of Irish peasant colonization in western Canada.[99] As part of this visit, Plunkett attended a meeting at the Winnipeg office of the Dominion Land Commissioner to discuss the possibility of Irish colonization in conjunction with private corporations, including the Canadian Pacific Railway, with landholdings in western Canada.[100] The board rejected the idea of Prairie colonization as prohibitively expensive, however, and the British government's enthusiasm for financing assisted emigration schemes, also influenced by the easing of agrarian unrest in rural Ireland in the 1890s, waned. The Canadian government had only shown a willingness to consider schemes in conjunction with the British government, having rejected other proposals for colonization from Irish landlords who sought to transplant their estates, in some cases complete with tenant farmers, to the Prairie West.[101]

The failure of Irish colonization schemes ultimately ensured that western Canada's Irish immigrant population would remain low in the late nineteenth century. The normal channels of immigration remained overwhelmingly directed to the United States, despite the Canadian government's sustained effort to redirect an increased share of the tide towards Canada. And while the examples of Whitewood and Macleod effectively illustrate the influence that Irish immigration could have in particular locations, migration largely established the Irish presence in the Prairie West during this period. As the example of Dufferin North demonstrates, it was a rural Irish population largely acculturated through birth in Canada or longtime residence prior to western migration, and formed part of the dominant Anglo-Celtic culture that emerged in the first decades of agricultural settlement in the region.

The Urban Context: The Irish in Late Nineteenth-Century Winnipeg

While the bulk of Irish settlement in western Canada in the last three decades of the nineteenth century was rural, the Irish also established a strong presence in Winnipeg. As the largest city in the Prairie West, as well as home to the majority of the region's urban Irish, Winnipeg presents the most promising opportunity to analyze the significance of the urban environment in late nineteenth-century western Canadian Irish settlement. Census data reveal that Manitoba's Irish immigrants were proportionately more likely than their intergenerational counterparts to settle in Winnipeg: 26.8 percent of Irish immigrants and 14.2 percent of intergenerational Irish resident in Manitoba lived in Winnipeg in 1901 (table 9). An examination of Manitoba's English and Scottish populations reveals a similar pattern, with the immigrant cohort of both groups more likely to live in Winnipeg than their respective intergenerational populations. In terms of overall settlement, factoring in both immigrant and intergenerational populations, the Irish were the least urban of Manitoba's Anglo-Celtic populations.[102]

Table 9 Percentage of Manitoba's Anglo-Celtic population living in Winnipeg, 1901

	Immigrant	Intergenerational	Overall Group
English	26.1	21.0	22.6
Scottish	20.6	17.4	17.9
Irish	26.8	14.2	15.4

Source: *Census of Canada*, 1901, vol. 1, Table 11, 290, and Table 14, 419.

The Irish presence in Winnipeg, both immigrant and intergenerational, was dominated by Protestants, though Roman Catholics made up a somewhat higher proportion of the Irish-born than of the intergenerational cohort (table 10). Census data also suggest that Irish Catholic immigrants were more economically disadvantaged than their Protestant counterparts (table 11). Irish Catholic immigrants appear to have enjoyed little occupational mobility between 1881 and 1901, with over half of that group in each census working as unskilled labourers, compared to between one-third and two-fifths of Irish-born Protestants. At the top of the socio-economic scale, Irish-born Catholics enjoyed less success than immigrant Protestants, with 22.7 percent of Irish-born Protestants falling into the business or professional classes at the time of the 1901 census, compared to only 13.2 percent of immigrant Catholics.

Table 10 Religion of Irish population of Winnipeg, 1901

	Protestant	%	Catholic	%	Total	%
Irish-born	848	77.3	249	22.7	1,097	100.0
Intergenerational	4,897	81.3	1,127	18.7	6,024	100.0
Total	5,745	80.7	1,376	19.3	7,121	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1901, Winnipeg City district (12). Totals exclude 63 intergenerational Irish and 16 Irish immigrants where religion was not given or was illegible.

Table 11 Occupations of Irish immigrants in Winnipeg, 1881 to 1901, percent

	1881 Catholic	1881 Protestant	1891 Catholic	1891 Protestant	1901 Catholic	1901 Protestant
Unskilled	52.6	33.0	59.1	39.8	54.4	36.6
Semi-Skilled	6.6	21.1	14.6	16.5	13.2	15.1
Skilled	6.6	12.8	5.5	10.1	7.4	9.7
Clerical	10.5	5.5	7.9	9.8	11.8	15.4
Business	18.4	14.7	3.0	17.9	10.3	15.4
Professional	3.9	7.3	9.1	5.0	2.9	7.3
Private	1.3	5.5	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.5

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1881; *Census of Canada*, 1891, Winnipeg City district (10); and *Census of Canada*, 1901, Winnipeg City district (12). Occupational classifications adapted from Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-95* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 260-61.

The issue of Irish Catholic urban settlement has long been among the most contentious topics in the historiography of the Irish in Canada and the diaspora, linked inexorably to the work of scholars such as H.C. Pentland and, in the American context, Kerby Miller, who both argued that the cultural passivity of Irish Catholic immigrants predisposed them to concentrate in urban environments rather than seek more promising opportunities for rural settlement. A. Gordon Darroch, Michael Ornstein and Donald Harman Akenson emerged as the most vocal detractors of this work, arguing that there was little statistical difference between Irish Protestant and Irish Catholic settlement patterns and economic success in Canada, and in the case of Akenson's work, throughout the diaspora.[103] While Akenson's conclusions in particular produced a strong backlash, most notably from Murray Nicholson, who stressed the importance of Toronto's Roman Catholic Church in disseminating a metropolitan culture to the rural Ontario hinterland, his findings have been validated by other historians of the Irish in Canada and elsewhere in the diaspora.[104] Even historians in the United States, traditionally the most sympathetic to Miller's interpretation, have increasingly moved away from arguments stressing the fatalistic worldview and cultural dislocation of Irish Catholic immigrants, though the emphasis on the urban experience of Irish Catholics in late nineteenth-century America remains largely intact.[105]

In the case of Winnipeg, despite indications from the census that Irish Catholic immigrants were economically disadvantaged, the group did not represent a ghettoized minority. For example, while Winnipeg's immigrant working class was typically concentrated overwhelmingly in wards five and six, comprising the city's industrial north end, only 35.3 percent of Irish Catholics lived in that area of the city in 1901 (table 12). By contrast, 88.5 percent of Winnipeg's Jews, 80.4 percent of its Slavs, and 59.6 percent of its Germans resided in wards five and six.[106] Indeed, the proportion of Irish immigrant Catholics living in the city's industrial wards was virtually identical to that of Irish-born Protestants (35.4 percent) in 1901, though both groups were slightly overrepresented in those wards when compared with the overall Anglo-Celtic population. And while Irish-born Catholics were somewhat less likely than their Protestant counterparts to reside in wards one and three, Winnipeg's most upscale residential areas, Irish Catholics were by no means disproportionately concentrated in the city's poorest district. Irish residential patterns in Winnipeg lend support to the conclusions of historians such as Darroch, Ornstein and Akenson that Irish Catholics were not uniquely predisposed to impoverished urban life.

Table 12 Distribution of Winnipeg's Irish-born and Anglo-Celtic populations, 1901

Wards	Irish-born Catholics	%	Irish-born Protestants	%	Anglo-Celtic Population	%
1 and 3 (Residential)	45	18.1	177	20.9	6,242	20.0
2 and 4 (Business)	116	46.6	371	43.7	14,814	47.4
5 and 6 (Industrial)	88	35.3	300	35.4	10,174	32.6
Total	249	100.0	848	100.0	31,230	100.0

Source: Irish-born data are from my count in the *Census of Canada*, 1901, Winnipeg City district (12); Anglo-Celtic population numbers adapted from Alan J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975), 163, 169. The Anglo-Celtic numbers are listed under the category of British in Artibise's monograph: I have changed the category to Anglo-Celtic for the sake of consistency. The total refers to all individuals, immigrant and intergenerational, of English, Scottish, Irish or Welsh origin.

Further, there is evidence that Winnipeg's Irish working-class population, both Catholic and Protestant, was largely migratory. Data collected on 506 adult male household heads from the 1891 census, linked wherever possible to the 1901 census, permits some observations about the extent to which Irish immigrants in Winnipeg were permanent or temporary residents. Exact matches existed when the subject had aged nine to eleven years between the two enumerations and other available information on the individual, such as family relations, had remained consistent. Probable matches indicated individuals for whom most of the available information was accurate but contained one or two minor anomalies. No match indicated that the subject of 1891 could not be found living anywhere in the city in 1901. The results of this tabulation reveal a sizeable turnover in population, with nearly three-quarters of the male heads of households identified in 1891 (74.3

percent) nowhere to be found in Winnipeg ten years later. Exact matches, illustrating a presence in Winnipeg in at least the two census years, were found for 17.4 percent of the sample, and a further 8.3 percent were probable matches. These findings are especially notable given the apparent stability in Winnipeg's Irish immigrant population during the 1890s. The city's overall population grew from 25,639 to 42,340 between 1891 and 1901, but the number of Irish immigrants changed little, falling only slightly from 1,225 to 1,218.[107] Given the sharp decrease in Irish immigration to Canada in the 1890s, the fact that the number of Irish immigrants did not grow at the same pace as the city's overall population is not surprising and mirrors broader trends in Manitoba, with the number of Irish immigrants resident in the province remaining virtually unchanged from 4,553 in 1891 to 4,537 in 1901.[108] The minimal movement in Winnipeg's Irish-born population, however, masks a tremendous internal fluidity. Hundreds of Irish immigrants moved into the city in the 1890s as hundreds of others moved on, while a small group remained as the core of the city's Irish presence.

The letters of John Moon, an Irish-born man who moved from Quebec to Manitoba in the early 1880s, provide an effective illustration of this fluidity and the opportunities offered by Winnipeg in regional Irish settlement. In the mid-1870s, Moon was living in Ottawa and suffering from debilitating health problems that prevented him from working and resulted in a debt to his landlord of nearly one hundred dollars. Moon's fortunes, however, began to turn after he moved to Manitoba. He had settled in Portage la Prairie by August 1881 and was earning enough money to enclose a remittance of ten pounds with a letter sent home to his father in Ireland. By January 1882 Moon had moved on to Winnipeg and reported to his father that he planned to take the train further west, expressing for the first time an interest in farming. Additional health difficulties kept him from moving again as planned, though in February 1882 he wrote to his father that he would likely settle several hundred miles west of the city. In the same letter, however, Moon noted the high wages being earned by carpenters and bricklayers in Winnipeg and opted to remain in the city. He clearly prospered and by the end of the year had sent another remittance for five pounds, explaining in the accompanying letter that he could not send more because he had invested most of his earnings in real estate. But despite his success in Winnipeg, Moon remained focused on the goal of farming. The following excerpt from another letter home, written in the broken English that was typical of Moon's correspondence, expressed interest in homesteading (all spelling and grammatical errors intentionally copied):

> I some some times think about taking up a farm but fait seams to wail against me in that or other ways. I am to hard to please for the place that I would like to settle down upon is settled before I get there but if Providence spairs me health to the spring I will very likely have a nother start for it.

Moon finally did take up a homestead in early 1883, and his next letter home was written from his farm in Thornhill, Manitoba. He complained about the harshness of the Manitoba winter, but reported that the quantity, quality and high price of agricultural products in the province surpassed anything that he had previously seen. Moon continued to send remittances back home as late as September 1885, at which time all record of correspondence with his father ceased.[109] Collectively, the letters provide valuable insight into the role played by Winnipeg in the eventual settlement of an Irish immigrant in rural Manitoba. In less than a decade, Moon had gone from crippling debt in Ottawa to relative prosperity in the West, with intermediate wage labour in Winnipeg playing a crucial transitional role in his economic recovery.

A second example of temporary working-class residence in Winnipeg comes from the annual reports of Dublin immigration agent Thomas Connolly. As noted earlier, agricultural workers were among the categories of preferred immigrant that the Canadian government instructed its agents in Ireland to recruit, and while the evidence is sketchy, there are indications of an organized agricultural labour migration chain involving Connolly and John Haverty, a prominent Irish Catholic immigrant and Canadian Pacific Railway foreman who operated the Pacific Hotel in Winnipeg with his brother Thomas. While the length of Connolly's acquaintance with Haverty is unclear, the two men had certainly met by March 1880 when Connolly delivered an address promoting further Irish immigration to western Canada at a banquet hosted by the Winnipeg-based St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, of which Haverty was president.[110] Connolly noted in his 1883 annual report that Haverty had visited Ireland and returned to Winnipeg with twelve men for agricultural work. The Dublin agent further noted that Haverty had retained a portion of their earnings for the purpose of "settling them on the land" the following spring.[111] Other evidence suggests that the scheme may have been operating two years earlier, as the 1881 census reveals twenty-three Irish Catholic immigrant labourers residing in a boarding house very close to the Pacific Hotel. Though there is no direct evidence that these workers represented an earlier recruitment by Haverty, the presence of nearly two dozen Irish Catholic immigrant workers, a concentration not found anywhere else in Winnipeg, in a boarding house so close to the Pacific

Hotel, is a striking coincidence.[112] At the very least, Connolly's reports suggest the presence of another chain migration scheme for Irish immigrant labourers involving temporary settlement in Winnipeg and eventual rural settlement.

The high wages available in Winnipeg in the early 1880s also entered into the calculations of those promoting assisted emigration schemes from Ireland to western Canada, most notably those of English philanthropists Vere Foster and James Hack Tuke. Foster's program was the most extensive assisted emigration scheme inaugurated in the post-Famine period and was aimed at helping those he deemed most vulnerable in Ireland's declining economy: unmarried young women. Between 1880 and 1884, Foster's emigration fund helped finance the emigration of 20,250 single women to North America where they were placed in positions as domestic servants.[113] Though the majority of those assisted by his program were sent to the United States, Foster toured Canada in 1883 to investigate the wages earned there by domestic servants and reported that those typically offered in Winnipeg were the highest in Canada.[114] The number of individuals, if any, going to the Manitoba capital as a result of Foster's program is unclear, though domestic service clearly presented the best employment opportunity for young Irish women in the city. Some sixty-two percent of Irish-born women working in Winnipeg in the late nineteenth century were employed as domestic servants or cooks (table 13).

The second scheme, directed by James Hack Tuke, resulted in the emigration of several thousand Irish to Canada between 1882 and 1884, including several hundred to the Prairie West. Tuke was one of the leading advocates of assisted Irish emigration in the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century, especially during the

Table 13 Occupations of Irish immigrant women in Winnipeg, 1891

Occupation	Catholics	Protestants	Total
Domestic Servant/ Maid	25	40	65
Cook	14	3	17
Dressmaker	1	13	14
Boarding House Keeper	1	9	10
Waitress	5	2	7
Laundress	6	0	6
Nurse	3	3	6
Other	1	6	7
Total	56	76	132

Source: My enumerations from the *Census of Canada*, 1891, Winnipeg City district (10). 'Other' consists of saleswoman (3), teacher (2), governess (1) and car repairer (1).

worst years of the agricultural crisis of the early 1880s. Rallying the support of over one hundred prominent political and business leaders, Tuke established an emigration committee in March 1882 and lobbied the British government for money to finance large-scale assisted emigration.[115] These efforts bore fruit later that year when British Prime Minister William Gladstone committed his government to supporting such a program, and despite fierce resistance from Irish nationalists, Parliament granted one hundred fifty thousand pounds under the Arrears of Rent Act to facilitate emigration from forty-two Poor Law Unions in western Ireland in 1883-84. In all, 7,376 Irish were assisted to immigrate to Canada between 1882 and 1884, most by the Tuke Committee.[116]

While willing to participate in the Tuke scheme at first, the Dominion government's enthusiasm for the program soon waned as suspicion grew that Canada was being used as a dumping ground for Irish paupers. As early as February 1883, J.G. Colmer of the Canadian High Commission in London commented that most peasants in western Ireland were unsuitable for settlement in Canada and expressed concern that the country's reputation would suffer in Ireland if assisted immigration failed.[117] Colmer traveled to County Kerry that same month to supervise the selection of emigrants destined for Canada from the Kenmore Poor Law Union. Of the forty-four individuals originally selected by the union, Colmer rejected twenty-four as being "not [of] the class who…would find ready employment" in the new country.[118] By January 1884, the Department of Agriculture reported that it would only continue to participate in the assisted emigration program if Ireland no longer sent "persons who are so far pauperized as to have lost [their] sense of self-respect."[119] In spring 1884, Canada discontinued its brief participation in the Tuke emigration scheme.[120]

Dissatisfaction with the Tuke Committee's work in Canada, however, came primarily from Ontario where most of the assisted immigrants had settled, predominantly in the province's urban centres. Archbishop Lynch of Toronto, already disillusioned by the collapse of the New Ireland scheme, returned to his previous anti-immigration stance and voiced opposition to further assisted immigration from the Poor Law Unions in 1883. Pressure to discontinue Canada's role in the Tuke program also came from the government of Ontario, which announced in early 1884 that it would no longer participate in assisted immigration schemes from Ireland.[121] But while the program was undoubtedly a failure in Ontario, there is evidence from the committee's annual reports that those who settled in Winnipeg did considerably better than those sent elsewhere in Canada, especially Toronto. While the Tuke Committee dispatched only two hundred immigrants directly to Manitoba in 1883, the organization's annual report for that year also notes that at least two individuals sent to Ontario continued on their own to Winnipeg, and that others planned to take up homesteads in the North-West the following year or made explicit requests to the committee to send them and their families to the Manitoba capital. Boasting that five of the assisted immigrants had already purchased houses in Winnipeg, the report further noted that emigrants sent to Manitoba were more prosperous than those sent to Ontario due to the high wages for labourers and domestic servants in Winnipeg.[122] In 1884, the Tuke Committee expanded its operations in western Canada, sending more immigrants directly to Winnipeg as well as to Brandon and Medicine Hat.[123]

The experience of Patrick Barrett, a former resident of County Mayo who was among those assisted by the Tuke Committee to resettle in western Canada in 1883, offers a personal glimpse into life for a working-class Irish immigrant in late nineteenth-century Winnipeg. Barrett reported in an 1883 letter to Tuke that he and his two sons had secured jobs as labourers, while his daughter was earning six dollars a month looking after two small children. He also noted that he had secured employment for another young immigrant, Bridget McGrath, as a domestic servant in Winnipeg.[124] According to Barrett, his own eldest daughter Catherine could have earned fifteen dollars a month as well working as a domestic servant, a high wage that reflected the great demand for domestic servants in the late nineteenth-century Prairie West. By the turn of the twentieth century, domestics earned on average between ten and twenty dollars a month in western Canada, compared to between eight and fourteen dollars elsewhere in the country.[125] Barrett, however, was a widower and Catherine was likely responsible for the household duties, as her father noted in his 1883 letter that he "could not spare her" and send her out to work.[126]

This letter was cited on several occasions as an example of the success of the Tuke emigrants, and while it is difficult to know to what extent the Barrett story was typical, the 1891 and 1901 census data for Winnipeg provide some corroboration that the family had done reasonably well. The 1891 census shows Patrick, a sixty-year-old widower, and his son Patrick, Jr., aged twenty-seven, continuing to work as labourers, with six other children, ranging in age from twelve-year-old Mary to twenty-eight-year-old Kate, living in the household. Bridget McGrath appeared in the census as a laundress in the household of Aleck and Mary McKay, a Catholic Irish couple who had also immigrated to Canada in 1883. The year of their arrival and the link with the Barrett family suggest that they may also have been Tuke immigrants, though this is impossible to substantiate.[127] By 1901, the elder Patrick Barrett had disappeared from the census, but his son Patrick remained and had married an Irish Catholic woman named Bridget who had also immigrated in 1883; in all likelihood she was the aforementioned Bridget McGrath, who was no longer living in the McKay household.[128]

The Barrett family was thus among the core group of 130 Irish born to be identified as exact or probable matches in both 1891 and 1901 censuses. As a general labourer, Patrick Barrett, Jr., belonged to the largest occupational cohort of that core group, with 36.2 percent classified as unskilled workers (table 14). The opposite end of that occupational spectrum, however, points to another critical feature of the Irish presence in late nineteenth-century Winnipeg, as 26.2 percent of male heads of households belonged to the business and professional classes. This figure included many of the city's most prominent merchants and political figures, part of the emerging commercial and political elite identified by Alan J. Artibise as dominating Winnipeg's civic affairs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[129] Profiles of two of these citizens illustrate the emerging significance of the Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, in the civic affairs of Winnipeg.

Table 14 Occupations of Winnipeg Irish identified in both 1891 and 1901 censuses

Occupational Category	Number	Percent
Unskilled labour	47	36.2
Semi-skilled labour	9	6.9
Skilled labour	16	12.3
Clerical	21	16.2
Business	26	20.0
Professional	8	6.2
Retired	3	2.2
Total	130	100.0

Source: My counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1891, Winnipeg City district (10); and *Census of Canada*, 1901, Winnipeg City district (12).

Stewart Mulvey was born in 1834 in County Sligo and immigrated to Canada at the age of twenty-two at the invitation of Egerton Ryerson to teach in Upper Canada, working first in Hamilton and then in Haldimand County. Mulvey was among Manitoba's first Irish residents, arriving as part of the Wolseley Expedition in 1870 and subsequently remaining in Fort Garry. In addition to launching one of the province's first newspapers, the short-lived *Liberal* in 1871, Mulvey had a long career of service in various levels of government: collector of inland revenue from 1873 to 1882, Winnipeg alderman from 1883 to 1888, and a member of the provincial legislature from 1896 to 1899. He was also one of the region's most prominent Orangemen, being not only one of the founding members of Manitoba's first lodge, established in 1871 at Fort Garry, but also both provincial and territorial grand master between 1872 and 1886.[130]

Born at Clamanty Mills, Ireland, in 1849, Edward Cass came to Canada as a child in 1853 and settled with his parents in Ottawa. After pursuing several opportunities in the United States, he moved to Winnipeg in 1882 where he began an extremely successful career as a contractor and came to be described by contemporaries as "a splendid example of the best type of business man of modern times." Cass's own recollection of his arrival in Winnipeg captures well the optimism of the city's commercial elite:

> I remember when I reached Winnipeg in the spring of 1882, I thought I had struck a real, live bustling western city. I came here from Ottawa where the conditions of life were entirely different, and I hailed this breezy western spirit with much enthusiasm…I went to bed with my head full of great achievements for the future, in which I was to be the moving spirit.

Cass would eventually sit on the board of directors of many of Winnipeg's leading construction companies and was also active in civic affairs, serving as alderman from 1909 to 1911. As one of the city's leading Roman Catholic citizens, he was also a founding member of the city's first branch of the Knights of Columbus in 1900.[131]

Conclusion

As the greatest settlement frontier of Canada and the British Empire, the Prairie West drew tens of thousands of Irish settlers in search of economic opportunity in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Throughout the period, intergenerational migrants made up the largest element of western Canada's Irish population, a position solidified by the disappointingly low levels of Irish immigration to the region and the failure of the Canadian and British governments to reach an agreement on Irish colonization. This failure also ensured that there would be no sizeable concentrations of Irish settlement in the rural Prairie West, with the distribution of the Irish population instead closely mirroring that of other Anglo-Celtic immigrant and migrant groups.

The period also saw the emergence of an Irish presence in the regional metropolis. While many Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, living in Winnipeg could be classified as unskilled workers, the Irish were far from a ghettoized underclass. Rather, the group could be found throughout the city's social structure, with men such as Cass and Mulvey occupying a place among Winnipeg's commercial and political elite. Both men also claimed positions of leadership within the city's Irish community through their participation in Irish associational activity. Mulvey was a member of the executive council of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society in the mid-1880s and vice-president of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association in 1900, while Cass was vice-president of the St. Patrick's Society in the early 1890s. These associations became vehicles through which prominent Irish articulated their particular visions of Irish identity, promoted the Irish as the region's leading citizens, and negotiated relations with other ethnic groups, all aimed at strengthening the position of the Irish in late nineteenth-century western Canada.

Notes

[1] Holland History Committee, *Holland, Manitoba: 1877-1967* (Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1967), 228-29.
[2] Douglas History Book Club, *Echoes of a Century* (Douglas: Douglas History Book Club, 1982), 58-59, 249-53.
[3] *Census of Canada*, 1901, vol. 1, Table 11, 286, and Table 14, 392-404, 446-47.
[4] *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 1, Table 35, 716-20.
[5] David Gagan, *Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land, and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 12-15, 147-48.
[6] Gagan, *Hopeful Travellers*, 58; and J. Richard Houston, *Numbering the Survivors: A History of the Standish Family of Ireland, Ontario and Alberta* (Agincourt, ON: Generation Press, 1979), 150-51.
[7] Bruce Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*, 2nd ed. (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 185.
[8] Nellie McClung, *Clearing in the West: My Own Story* (Toronto: Thomas Allen and Son Limited, 1965), 7, as quoted in Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas*, 189.
[9] McClung, *Clearing in the West*, 31.
[10] June M. Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980* (Carman, MB: Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1982), 531-44 (Kennedy family), 590-605 (McCullough family), 725-28 (Sexsmith family). The total of thirty-three is very likely a conservative estimate, as the family biographies make other passing references to further connections which cannot be fully established with available information. The thirty-three include Samuel and Jane Kennedy with their eight children; Alex and Olivia McCullough with their six children; John and Margaret McCullough with their six children; Margaret, Nelson, Georgianna and Henry McCullough; George and Flora Sexsmith; and Charles Kennedy, Samuel's full brother. The totals were cross-referenced with data from the *Census of Canada*, 1881, Marquette census district (186), Dufferin North subdistrict (g-1 and g-2). By 1881, several of the Kennedy children appear to have moved on, but the local history clearly indicates that all eight children originally moved west with the family in 1871.
[11] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 544.
[12] Information on the years in which the sons acquired their land taken from Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 2-6. Information on the years in which the four daughters married is not available.
[13] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 355-56.
[14] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 631-39.
[15] Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 222.
[16] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 202-03.
[17] Carman Centennial Book Committee, *Up to Now: A Story of Dufferin and Carman* (Carman, MB: Carman Centennial Book Committee, 1967), 93; and Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 356, 532.

[18] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 532; and Carman Centennial Book Committee, *Up to Now*, 13. For the early Orange presence in Manitoba, and the changing of the name of the Rivière aux Isles de Bois to the Boyne River, see also Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 60.

[19] Watson, *The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 1880-1980*, 120, 634.

[20] For examples of individuals hired on a temporary basis to promote Canada, see J. Clark to Minister of Agriculture J.H. Pope, 22 August 1881, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 321, docket 33115, Library and Archives of Canada (hereafter LAC), Ottawa; J.J. Curren to Department of Agriculture, 23 April 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 366, docket 39364, LAC, Ottawa; and W.J. Maguire to Charles Tupper, 10 August 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 385, docket 41498, LAC, Ottawa. For examples of the touring farmer delegate reports, see C.A. Pringle, *Canada, Manitoba and the North-West: Notes of a Visit* (Ottawa: Department of Agriculture of the Government of Canada, 1882); and Canada, "Report of Mr. R.H.B.P. Anderson, of Listowel, Co. Kerry, Ireland, on Ontario, Manitoba, and the North-West," *Sessional Papers*, 1881, no. 7, pp. 70-89.

[21] Marjory Harper, "Enticing the Emigrant: Canadian Agents in Ireland and Scotland, c. 1870 – c. 1920," *Scottish Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (April 2004): 57.

[22] Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 118-21.

[23] David Hall, "Clifford Sifton: Immigration and Settlement Policy, 1896-1905," in *The Settlement of the West*, ed. Howard Palmer (Calgary: Comprint Publishing, 1977), 71.

[24] Department of the Interior Accounts' Branch, *Approximate Statement of Expenditure on Immigration from Ireland from 1 July 1892 to 30 June 1902*, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 110, file 21988, LAC, Ottawa.

[25] Canada, "Annual Report of Special Immigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1876, no. 7, p. 95; and Canada, "Annual Report of Dublin Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1877, no. 8, pp. 153-54.

[26] Canada, "Annual Report of the Belfast Agency," *Sessional Papers*, 1876, no. 8, p. 83.

[27] Michael Turner, *After the Famine: Irish Agriculture, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 15.

[28] Turner identifies thirty acres as the upper threshold of the size of an independent, self-sufficient peasant farm. He contends that a single farmer could, in theory, operate a fifteen to thirty acre farm with no additional hired labour. See Turner, *After the Famine*, 84.

[29] Timothy W. Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy, 1850-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 158.

[30] Pauline Jackson, "Women in Nineteenth-Century Irish Emigration,' *International Migration Review* 18, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 1009.

[31] Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish: A History* (New York: Longman, 2000), 135; Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 403; and W.E. Vaughan and A.J. Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1978), 246.

[32] Jackson, "Women in Nineteenth-Century Irish Emigration," 1009-11.

[33] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 400.

[34] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 399.

[35] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 388. This total includes the families of evicted farmers.

[36] Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1996), 56.

[37] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 56.

[38] Kenny, *The American Irish*, 133; and David Fitzpatrick, "Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century," *Irish Historical Studies* 22, no. 86 (September 1980): 129.

[39] United Kingdom, *Emigration Statistics of Ireland*, 1883, published in the *Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Emigration Series*, vol. 26, ed. P. Ford (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), 366.

[40] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 350, 380.

[41] Vaughan and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971*, 59.

[42] Emigration statistics for 1876 through 1899 taken from United Kingdom, *Emigration Statistics of Ireland*, published in the *Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Emigration Series*, vols. 25-28, ed. P. Ford (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971). Emigration statistics for 1900 taken from United Kingdom, *Emigration Statistics of Ireland*, 1900, found in the Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 110, file 21988, LAC, Ottawa. Data on Catholic proportion of Ulster's population taken from Vaughan and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971*, 59.

[43] David Fitzpatrick, "Emigration, 1871-1921," in *A New History of Ireland*, vol. 6, *Ireland Under the Union, Part II, 1870-1921*, ed. W.E. Vaughn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 630-31.

[44] *Freeman's Journal*, 12 November 1883, enclosed in Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 388, docket 41875, LAC, Ottawa.

[45] Quotes from the *Kilkenny Journal* and *Munster News*, included in correspondence from Charles Devlin to the Department of the Interior, 11 June 1897, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 147, file 34876, LAC, Ottawa; and *The Nation*, 1 May 1897, 8 May 1897.

[46] Canada, "Annual Report of Dublin Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1871, no. 6, p. 81

[47] Canada, "Annual Report of Special Immigration Agent in Ireland," *Sessional Papers*, 1875, no. 8, p. 130; and Canada, "Report of Special Immigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1878, no. 8, p. 161.

[48] John A. Macdonald Papers (all correspondence between Thomas Connolly and Macdonald), 181804-06, 1 July 1882; 189785-6, 25 August 1883; 190127-8, 20 September 1883; 700-02, 18 May 1882; 66418-9, 2 July 1881, NAC, Ottawa.

[49] Andy Bielenberg, "Irish Emigration to the British Empire, 1700-1914," in *The Irish Diaspora*, ed. Andy Bielenberg (London: Longman, 2000), 221-22.

[50] Marilyn Barber, *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 9-10.

[51] James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 314-16.

[52] Canada, "Annual Report of the Belfast Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1876, no. 8, p. 83.

[53] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 96.

[54] Harper, "Enticing the Emigrant," 51. For examples of complaints made by Canadian agents about their inability to compete with Australasian agents because of free passages, see Canada, "Annual Report of the Belfast Emigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1873, no. 26, p. 99; "Report of the Belfast Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1875, no. 40, p. 108; "Annual Report of Dublin Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1877, no. 8, p. 154; "Annual Report of Belfast Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1877, no. 8, p. 155; and "Report of Special Immigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1878, no. 9, p. 159.

[55] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 56.

[56] Whitewood History Book Committee, *Whitewood and Area, 1892-1982*, vol I (Whitewood, SK: The Whitewood Herald, 1992), 551.

[57] Canada, "Annual Report of the Dublin Emigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1885, no. 8, p. 197.

[58] In Connolly's annual reports, two spellings of the brothers' surname are given: Cosgrave for Francis, Cosgrove for Thomas. The Whitewood local history confirms the spelling of Cosgrave as appropriate for Francis, though there is no biographical entry for Thomas. There is sufficient evidence, however, to confirm that they are brothers. When the brothers are referred to collectively, the Cosgrave spelling has been adopted.

[59] Canada, "Annual Report of the Dublin Emigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1887, no. 12, pp. 317-18.

[60] *Census of Canada*, 1891, Assiniboia East district (186), Broadview subdistrict (A-11).

[61] Canada, "Annual Report of the Dublin Emigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1885, no. 8, p. 197.

[62] Canada, "Annual Report of the Dublin Emigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1886, no. 10, p. 351.

[63] Data collected for this table does not include everyone listed as a rancher in the occupation column of the 1891 census. The data is at times very sloppy, listing wives and children as ranchers, and often making little distinction between ranchers and hired ranch hands. For the sake of consistency and clarity, only household heads listed as ranchers were included on this table.

[64] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod: Our Colourful Past: A History of the Town of Fort Macleod From 1874 to 1924* (Calgary: Friesen Printers, 1977), 158, 406-07; and L.V. Kelly, *The Range Men* (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1913), 83.

[65] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod: Our Colourful Past*, 251; and Kelly, *The Range Men*, 83.

[66] John Blue, *Alberta, Past and Present, Historical and Biographical*, vol. II (Chicago: Pioneer History Publishing Company, 1924), 102-04; and Edward Brado, *Cattle Kingdom: Early Ranching in Alberta* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1984), 53.

[67] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 251, 406-07.

[68] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 341.

[69] Sheilagh S. Jameson, "Women in the Southern Alberta Ranch Community, 1881-1914," in *The Canadian West: Social Change and Economic Development*, ed. Henry C. Klassen (Calgary: Comprint Publishing Company, 1977), 64.

[70] For the class dimensions of the early North-West Mounted Police, see Roderick C. Macleod, *The North-West Mounted Police and Law Enforcement, 1873-1905* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 73-88.

[71] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 406.

[72] Blue, *Alberta, Past and Present*, vol. II, 102.

[73] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 148, 367-69.

[74] Pincher Creek Historical Society, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass: History of the Pioneers of Pincher Creek and District* (Calgary: D.W. Friesen and Sons Ltd., 1974), 644-47; and Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 157.

[75] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 340.

[76] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 288.

[77] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 433-35; *Census of Canada*, 1891, Alberta district (197), Macleod subdistrict (C3); and *Census of Canada*, 1901, Alberta district, Macleod subdistrict (v-2).

[78] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 268-69.

[79] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 354-56; and *Census of Canada*, 1901, Alberta district, Macleod subdistrict (v-2).

[80] Fort Macleod Historical Society, *Fort Macleod*, 219.

[81] Whitewood History Book Committee, *Whitewood and Area, 1892-1982*, vol I, 551.

[82] Brado, *Cattle Kingdom*, 79; Kelly, *The Range Men*, 186, 192; and Blue, *Alberta, Past and Present*, vol. II, 105-6

[83] Kelley and Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic*, 74-6.

[84] Great Britain, "Report of a Committee of the Privy Council on a Proposal for the Organization of an Irish Immigration to Manitoba and the Northwest," March 1881, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 309, docket 31834, LAC, Ottawa.

[85] Gerald J. Stortz, "Archbishop Lynch and New Ireland,: An Unfulfilled Dream for Canada's Northwest," *Catholic Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (October 1982): 622.

[86] David Shanahan, "The Irish Question in Canada: Ireland and Canadian Politics, 1880-1922," Ph.D. dissertation, Carleton University (1989), 25, 36-37.

[87] Donald Creighton, *John A. Macdonald: The Old Chieftain* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1955), 331.

[88] Raymond J.A. Huel, *Archbishop A.-A. Taché of St. Boniface: The "Good Fight" and the Illusive Vision* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2003), 210.

[89] John Joseph Lynch, *The Evils of Wholesale and Improvident Emigration from Ireland* (Toronto: [n.p.], 1864), as quoted in Stortz, "Archbishop Lynch and New Ireland," 614.

[90] Stortz, "Archbishop Lynch and New Ireland," 617.

[91] James P. Shannon, *Catholic Colonization on the Western Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 50-59; and Ann Regan, "The Irish," in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, ed. June Drenning Homquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), 138-39.

[92] Kenny, *The American Irish*, 143-44.

[93] Shanahan, "The Irish Question in Canada," 62-7.

[94] Creighton, *John A. Macdonald: The Old Chieftain*, 334.

[95] Memo from the Undersecretary of State for Ireland to the Colonial Office, 14 April 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, I-1, vol. 373, docket 40120, LAC, Ottawa.

[96] Great Britain, *Emigration from the Congested Districts: Select Committee Report with Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index* (1889), 274, vol. 10, published in *Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Emigration Series*, vol. 9, ed. P. Ford (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1971), testimony of Undersecretary for the Colonies Sir Robert G.W. Herbert, 49-50/1005; and testimony of Major Ruttledge-Fair, local government board inspector for the Government of Ireland, 114-15/2176.

[97] Rev. John J. Coffey, *Report on the suitability of the North-West for Irish colonization*, 6 February 1886, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, series I-1, vol. 470, docket 51444, LAC, Ottawa.

[98] N.C. Fleming and Alan O'Day, *The Longman Handbook of Modern Irish History Since 1800* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005), 750.

[99] Gerard Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor: Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 187, 190-91.

[100] *Notes of a meeting held at the office of the Commissioner of Dominion Lands, Winnipeg, 5 October 1891*, Department of the Interior Records, RG 15, series D-II-1, vol. 656, file 279917, LAC, Ottawa.

[101] R. Vesey-Stoney to Minister of Agriculture J.H. Pope, 23 October 1880, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 295, docket 30430, LAC, Ottawa; G.H. Campbell to H.B. Smith, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, "Establishing an Irish Colony in Manitoba," Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 692, docket 79203, LAC, Ottawa; and John Pennefather to Dublin Castle, 24 July 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 410, docket 44429, LAC, Ottawa.

[102] This discussion focuses on Winnipeg, but the same pattern holds true when the province's smaller urban centres are factored in as well. Overall, 28.2 percent of Manitoba's Irish lived in urban environments in 1901, compared with 30.9 percent of the province's Scots and 35.4 percent of its English. Similarly, 30.9 percent of the Irish in the North-West Territories in 1901 lived in urban centres, compared with 33.4 percent of Scots and 32.1 percent of English resident in the North-West Territories.

See the historical comparison tables in the *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 1, Table 35, 716-20.

[103] Donald Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History*, 2nd ed. (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 35, 39; Akenson, "Irish Migration to North America, 1800-1920," in *The Irish Diaspora*, ed. Andy Bielenberg (London: Longman, 2000), 128-31; and Akenson, *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1922: An International Perspective* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 48-50, 84-85.

[104] Murray Nicholson, "Ecclesiastical Metropolitanism and the Evolution of the Archdiocese of Toronto," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 15, no. 29 (May 1982): 156; Nicholson, "The Irish Experience in Ontario: Rural or Urban?" *Urban History Review* 14, no.1 (June 1985): 41-43; and Alan O'Day, "Revising the Diaspora," in *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy*, ed. D. George Bryce and Alan O'Day (London: Routledge, 1996), 207-08.

[105] Kevin Kenny, "Diaspora and Comparison: The Global Irish as a Case Study," *Journal of American History* 90, no. 1 (June 2003): 138. For a recent study stressing the cultural adaptability and resourcefulness of even the most impoverished Irish Catholic immigrants, see Tyler Anbinder, "From Famine to Five Points: Lord Lansdowne's Irish Tenants Encounter North America's Most Notorious Slum," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 2 (April 2002): 350-87.

[106] Alan J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975), 163.

[107] Data on Winnipeg's Irish immigrant population taken from *Census of Canada*, 1891 and 1901. Data on Winnipeg's overall population growth taken from Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 134.

[108] *Census of Canada*, 1891, vol. 1, Table 5, 333; and *Census of Canada*, 1901, vol. 1, Table 14, 446-47.

[109] John Moon to his father, 26 April [n.d.]; 14 August 1881; 4 January 1882; 24 February 1882; 29 November 1882; [n.d.] December 1882; 6 February 1883; and Charles Foy to Robert Young (regarding remittance sent by Moon), 19 September 1885, Canadian Emigrant Papers, T3355/1; T3355/5; T3355/7; T3355/8; T3355/9; T3355/10; T3355/11; and T3355/12, Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (hereafter PRONI), Belfast.

[110] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1880. Haverty was listed as society president in the *Henderson's Directory for Winnipeg*, 1880, 188. Connolly was appointed emigration agent in Dublin on 7 May 1880. See Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 686, file 1087, LAC, Ottawa.

[111] Canada, "Report of the Dublin Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1883, no. 10, p. 218.

[112] *Census of Canada*, 1881, Winnipeg City district, ward 3.

[113] Fitzpatrick, "Emigration, 1871-1921," 621.

[114] Vere Foster, *Mr. Vere Foster's Second Irish Female Emigration Fund, 1880-83*, D3618/D/10/7, PRONI, Belfast.

[115] Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, 173.

[116] Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, 195.

[117] Report of J.G. Colmer to Henry Robinson, 19 February 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 363, docket 38975, NAC, Ottawa.

[118] J.G. Colmer to Alexander Galt, 22 February 1883, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 363, docket 38942, LAC, Ottawa.

[119] Canada, *OIC Report on Imperial Despatch from Lord Lieutenant of Ireland re: Emigration to Canada of Pauper Irish*, 28 January 1884, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 394, docket 42500, LAC, Ottawa..

[120] Governor General's Office to Department of Agriculture, 13 March 1884, Department of Agriculture Records, RG 17, vol. 398, docket 42963, LAC, Ottawa.

[121] Gerard Moran, "State Aided Emigration From Ireland to Canada in the 1880s," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 20, no. 2 (December 1994): 13-15; and David Spence, Immigration Department, Province of Ontario, to Howard Hodgkin, Tuke Committee [n.d.], *British Sessional Papers* (1884), vol. LIV, no. 235.

[122] Tuke Emigration Committee, *Mr. Tuke's Fund: Memorandum by Mr. Howard Hodgkin and Captain Ruttledge-Fair, as to Their Recent Visit to Canada to Inquire into the Condition and Prospects of the Emigrants Sent Out by the Committee* (December 1883), ACC# 9339, University of Calgary Special Collections.

[123] Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor*, 198.

[124] Great Britain, *Emigration from the Congested Districts*, testimony of Major Ruttledge-Fair, 113/2147.

[125] Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women: A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company Canada, Ltd., 1996), 128.

[126] Great Britain, *Emigration from the Congested Districts*, testimony of Major Ruttledge-Fair, 113/2147.

[127] *Census of Canada*, 1891, Winnipeg City district, ward 5, E3, and ward 2, B2.

[128] *Census of Canada*, 1901, Winnipeg City district, ward 5, E15.

[129] Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 23-42.

[130] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba: A Dictionary of Manitoba Biography from the Earliest Times to 1920* (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1971), 166; and Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 290.

[131] Frank H. Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba*, vol. II (Winnipeg: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1913), 625-27; and Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 34, 288.

Chapter Two

"A Good and Patriotic Citizen": Irishness and Canadian Identity in Manitoba, 1874-1904

On the afternoon of 17 March 1875, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba gathered at its Winnipeg headquarters in preparation for the day's events. Members then marched alongside students from St. Boniface College through the streets of the Manitoba capital to St. Mary's Chapel to hear High Mass celebrated by Archbishop Alexandre-Antonin Taché. The archbishop delivered an address detailing the history and accomplishments of St. Patrick, using the occasion as well to urge all nationalities in the province to "unite in one feeling of charity" and to "live in harmony and work together for the general welfare."[1] After hosting a concert which raised fifty dollars for charity, society members retired to the Grand Central Hotel for a late meal, bringing to a close the first public observance of St. Patrick's Day by an Irish association in the Prairie West.[2]

Established in 1874, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba was the first Irish society organized in western Canada, and the first of several such associations to be established in Winnipeg over the next three decades. As the Prairie urban centre with by far the largest Irish population throughout this period, Winnipeg inevitably emerged as the metropolis of Irish associational activity in the region. In fact, local Irish were following a national pattern, as St. Patrick's Societies and other Irish associations were well established by the mid-nineteenth century in most Canadian cities with a sizeable Irish presence, including Saint John, Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto.[3] Many of these societies became sites of vibrant debate within their respective Irish communities in the 1860s and 1870s, as the boundaries of Irishness in

Canada were negotiated against the backdrop of rising sectarian tensions, the intensification of nationalist politics in the Irish homeland and, most critically, the Fenian raids, which saw Irish-American nationalists attack British North America in the 1860s as part of a strategy to force the British into granting Ireland full independence.[4]

Though similar issues would resonate with Winnipeg's Irish community, the growth of Irish societies in late nineteenth-century Manitoba was not merely an extension of similar activity in central and eastern Canada. Rather, a distinctly regional variant of Irishness emerged in which western Canadian Irish leaders sought to negotiate the boundaries of Irishness in an urban centre that quickly evolved from a minor frontier settlement to a self-conscious regional metropolis. Irish associational leaders in Manitoba sought to harness Irish societies for particular social and political goals, balancing expressions of group solidarity with efforts to forge closer relations with other ethnic and religious groups. The specific objectives of these Irish societies shifted in response to the social, political and economic evolution of the Irish ethnic group, as well as various regional, national and international forces. The latter included the spectacular growth of Winnipeg, the shifting ethnic and religious balance in Manitoba with the arrival of ever more newcomers to the province and the unresolved national question in the Irish homeland.

Broadly speaking, Irish associational activity in this period can be divided into three distinct stages. Stage one was dominated by Winnipeg's Irish Catholics, who monopolized Irish associational culture through the 1870s. Irish Catholics established the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba to assert communal strength and to negotiate relations with two key groups: the French, with whom the Irish Catholics shared a faith, and Anglo-Celtic Protestants, with whom they shared a common linguistic and, to a degree, cultural heritage. Crisis in the Irish homeland acted as a catalyst for a fundamental shift in Irish associational culture, and the emergence of stage two, in which Catholic exclusivity yielded to a more inclusive vision of Irishness. In 1880, many of Winnipeg's leading Irishmen, both Catholic and Protestant, organized a relief committee to raise money to alleviate suffering in Ireland brought on by crop failure and the renewed threat of famine. Collaboration on this campaign laid the foundation of non-sectarian cooperation in associational activity for the balance of the nineteenth century as Winnipeg's Irish societies opened their membership to both Catholics and Protestants. Reflecting the experience of the relief committee, Irish associational activity in this stage also came under the domination of the city's Irish professional, business and political elite. The opening years of the twentieth century, identifying stage three, saw a return to a distinctly sectarian Irish associational culture, but now one dominated by the city's Irish Protestants. The decisive factor was Queen Victoria's recognition of Irish military service during the Boer War, stimulating the establishment of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association. Promoting a vision of Irishness rooted heavily in imperial service and loyalty, it was very much a product of the Boer War and did not long outlast the conflict, dissolving in 1904.

These three visions dominated Winnipeg's Irish associational culture at different times between 1874 and 1904. Yet while each articulated a distinct variant of Irishness, they shared in common a budding regional consciousness that sought to root the Irish, whether Catholic or Protestant, firmly in western Canada's past, present and future. In the 1870s, for example, lacking the historic claim to settlement in Manitoba enjoyed by the Scots, Winnipeg's Irish Catholics chose as their society's honorary president Andrew McDermott, one of the first Irish to settle in the Selkirk colony in 1812.[5] Then, at the turn of the twentieth century, Irish Protestants dined on St. Patrick's Day under a portrait of Irish immigrant Orangeman Thomas Scott, executed at the hands of Métis insurgents during the Red River resistance in 1870. Most critically, as non-sectarian societies were established under the domination of political and business elites in the 1880s and 1890s, St. Patrick's Day events celebrated Irish contributions to building a strong, united and prosperous society in western Canada. It was this vision of Irishness – non-sectarian, de-polticized, rooted strongly in the Prairie settlement experience – that would emerge as the most important legacy of this period, dominating Irish associational culture as new societies were established with the spread of the Irish population across the region in the early twentieth century.

Catholic Irishness

The first stage of Irish society activity in Manitoba was dominated by the exclusively Catholic St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, active from 1874 to 1882. The total number of men who joined the association is unclear, though the *Daily Free Press* reported its membership to be approximately 100 in 1876, a sizable number for an Irish Catholic population, immigrant and intergenerational, that still numbered only 414 in 1881.[6] The society included among its leaders some of Winnipeg's most prominent Irish Catholics, including Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell, president of the

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, and Daniel Carey, one of the first lawyers to open a practice in Winnipeg.[7] For the most part, however, the society was dominated by the Irish Catholic middle and lower-middle class, with members of the skilled labour, business and clerical occupational groups accounting for over sixty percent of society officers between 1874 and 1881 (table 15). Conversely, unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, who made up over half of Irish Catholics in 1881, accounted for only thirteen percent of officers in this period. The leadership of the society appears to have attracted immigrant and intergenerational Irish in roughly equal numbers. Of the seventeen society officers for whom birthplace information is available, nine were born in Ireland; six were born in Ontario or Quebec; and one was born in each of Newfoundland, Red River and the United States.

Table 15 Occupation of St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba officers compared to overall Irish Catholic group, 1874-81 (percent)

Occupation	Irish Catholic Group	Society Officers (N=24)
Unskilled labour	40.5	4.2
Semi-skilled labour	14.3	8.3
Skilled labour	8.9	20.8
Business	16.3	25.0
Clerical	12.6	29.2
Professional	6.3	8.3
Private	1.1	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Data on the overall Irish Catholic group comes from my counts from the *Census of Canada, 1881*, Winnipeg census district. Lists of St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba officers from 1874 to 1881 were taken from newspaper coverage of society meetings and St Patrick's Day events, as well as from the *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*. Occupational classifications were adopted from Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-95* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 261-62.

Through the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, Winnipeg's Irish Catholics responded to two critical shifts in the province's social structure in the 1870s. First, the sectarian balance in Manitoba changed dramatically in favour of Protestants, with the Catholic proportion of the city's Irish residents falling from 44.6 percent in 1871 to 18.7 percent ten years later.[8] Critically, although the Irish formed a sizeable minority within Manitoba's Catholic population, the French outnumbered the Irish by a factor of approximately four to one in 1881.[9] Second, while part of the Anglo-Celtic majority which established its dominance in the province in the 1870s, Irish Catholics were its smallest constituent element. Both immigrant and intergenerational Irish were heavily outnumbered by their English and Scottish compatriots, and Catholics remained a minority within the Irish population.

The St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba pursued several strategies to address the various challenges that Irish Catholics faced in Manitoba's first decade. To begin, the society promoted close cooperation with its French coreligionists, at once accommodating itself to the prevailing power structure of the western Canadian Roman Catholic hierarchy and projecting an image of Catholic solidarity across ethnic lines, most notably during the society's annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The society also promoted Irish immigration to western Canada and became a vocal supporter of Irish Catholic colonization in Manitoba, particularly as the Dominion government considered plans for the New Ireland settlement. By supporting colonization, Winnipeg's Irish Catholics sought simultaneously to address the group's demographic inferiority and to demonstrate their firm commitment to Manitoba's economic development. Finally, it was also through the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba that Irish Catholics situated themselves within the province's Anglo-Celtic majority, laying claim to a common British heritage alongside the Scots and English. Irish Catholic assertions of Britishness were complicated in 1880-81, however, by accusations of sympathy for militant Irish nationalism, as public statements made during a wave of violence in the Irish homeland by some of Winnipeg's most prominent Irish Catholics raised questions about the group's loyalty. Though quite successful through the 1870s, the society's efforts to reconcile these diverse objectives became increasingly hampered in the early 1880s and the society dissolved itself sometime between November 1881 and March 1882.

From the outset, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba promoted a vision of Irish identity emphasizing Catholic piety, respectability and solidarity with their Francophone counterparts. Existing historiography on Catholicism in western Canada has focused heavily on the pervasiveness of conflict and the struggle between Irish and French Catholics for ecclesiastical power in the region, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[10] The relationship, however, was not one of unrelenting hostility, particularly during Manitoba's first decade. For example, Rev. Joseph McCarthy, priest for the Anglophone Catholics at Fort Garry from 1869 to 1872, described relations between French and Irish Catholics during that time as harmonious, and Archbishop Taché enjoyed widespread popularity and respect among his Irish parishioners.[11] Prior to the archbishop's departure for the general chapter of the Oblates in Autun, France, in May 1879, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba presented him with a farewell address which expressed its "sentiments of respect, esteem and veneration." The society also used the occasion to honour the extensive missionary work of Rev. Albert Lacombe, who was travelling with Taché to France. Lacombe had laboured among the Cree and Blackfoot peoples through most of the 1850s and 1860s before moving to Winnipeg in 1874 to minister to city's

Anglophone Catholics.[12] Franco-Irish cooperation was also reflected in the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba's organizational structure: the only priest to serve as the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba's official chaplain was a French Canadian, Rev. Joachim-Albert Allard.[13]

Public and ritualistic occasions such as Winnipeg's annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations provided the most visible platform from which the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba promoted Catholic unity. For example, on St. Patrick's Day morning in both 1875 and 1876, members of the society marched from their headquarters to St. Mary's Chapel for morning services, accompanied by French Catholic students from the St. Boniface brass band. This procession, though, was cancelled due to poor weather in 1877 and available evidence cannot confirm whether or not it happened in subsequent years.[14] Prominent French Canadians were well represented, however, at the evening lectures, concerts and banquets that continued to be held. Officers from the local St. Jean-Baptiste Society, the largest Francophone ethnic organization in Canada, typically attended the evening events, while Joseph Royal lent his voice to the 1876 concert, singing a variety of selections in French. Royal, speaker of the Manitoba legislature and one of the most prominent Francophone politicians in the province, was a regular guest at St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba events.[15] The most striking expression of Catholic unity, however, came after St. Patrick's Day High Mass in 1879 when society president George McPhillips presented Archbishop Taché with an illuminated address detailing the common apostolic missions of France and Ireland. The text praised the historic work of French missionaries in North America and pointed to the longstanding cooperation between the Irish and French in the spread of Catholicism throughout the world. It went on to honour the archbishop for holding St. Patrick's "memory as dear and…faith as strong as the most exacting Irishman," entirely appropriate since St. Patrick also "held the fair land of France his motherland."[16]

St. Patrick's Day events also provided members of the society with the opportunity to address issues of key concern to the group, most notably Irish Catholic immigration and settlement. In his 1876 St. Patrick's Day oration, for example, Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell implored all society members to work to attract Irish immigrants to Manitoba and to help them in their social and economic adjustment to life in Canada.[17] During the society's St. Patrick's Day celebrations in 1878, president George McPhillips noted that a number of Irish immigrants had recently arrived in the province and reminded members of their duty to contact the newcomers and offer any necessary assistance; vice-president Frank McPhillips used the same occasion to urge Irish Catholics to form a colonization society to secure land grants for Irish immigrants.[18] No such organization was established, but the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba did take other steps towards attracting Irish immigrants in 1879-80. First, it passed a resolution in March 1879 in favour of issuing an address to the people of Ireland that included "full information regarding the advantages offered by Manitoba to small capitalists who desire to obtain comfortable homes." This address was to be published in pamphlet form for distribution in Ireland and printed in Irish and Irish American newspapers.[19] Second, the society responded to the worsening of the agricultural crisis in Ireland in 1880 by using the visit to Winnipeg of John O'Connor, member of Parliament for Russell, Ontario, and postmaster-general for the

Dominion, as an opportunity to promote the assisted immigration and colonization of Irish peasants in Manitoba. The society had ample reason to expect a sympathetic reception for their proposal, as O'Connor had long been a vocal advocate of Irish Catholic interests.[20] At the conclusion of his trip to Manitoba, society president John Haverty presented him with an address urging the Canadian government to adopt a "generous and wise policy of assisted immigration" to aid landless Irish peasants, a sentiment strongly endorsed by O'Connor in a reciprocal address to Haverty.[21]

With the influx of Protestants into Manitoba in the 1870s, the issue of Catholic settlement was seemingly one of common interest to both French and Irish Catholics. Given the declarations of Catholic solidarity by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and its celebrations of historic Franco-Irish cooperation, it is notable that Manitoba's Irish Catholics made little effort to cooperate with their French counterparts to promote Catholic settlement. Rather, both groups worked independently for the most part and approached the issue along national instead of strictly religious lines, focusing largely on increasing the size of their particular ethnic group rather than of Catholics in general. The French were the first to organize, establishing the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba in 1874 to promote French migration and rural settlement in the province. Archbishop Taché lent his support by sending several clergymen, including Rev. Lacombe in 1876, to Quebec and the United States to work as migration agents.[22] At the same time, while Taché worked with Toronto archbishop John Joseph Lynch in support of the New Ireland settlement, he did so only after efforts to attract Francophone Catholic settlers had failed badly in the 1870s. In the words of Taché's biographer Raymond Huel, the archbishop was forced "to put aside his preference for French colonists" in 1880 and support Irish colonization as the only viable way to counter Protestant population growth.[23] Similarly, efforts by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba to attract Catholic immigrants were focused narrowly on the Irish homeland. Frank McPhillips' call in 1878 for Irish Catholics to form a colonization society noted the fine work in this regard of their "French brethren," but there is no evidence that the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba offered support to the work of the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba or any other French colonization ventures.[24]

To a degree, this failure by French and Irish Catholics to cooperate on settlement reflected the boundaries of Catholic solidarity in early Manitoba. Despite the rhetoric of harmony, Manitoba's Irish Catholics were not nearly as vulnerable in the 1870s to assimilative pressures as their French coreligionists who became the primary target of Protestants seeking to erode provisions in the Manitoba Act of 1870 that protected Francophone and Catholic education. This campaign was driven by the Orange Order, which spread rapidly across Manitoba in the 1870s. As illustrated in the case study of Dufferin North, Orangemen were among Manitoba's first agricultural settlers, and a strong Orange presence in the Wolseley Expedition ensured that the Order would quickly take root in western Canada. Manitoba's first Orange lodge was established at Fort Garry in September 1870 by members of the expedition, and the arrival of thousands of Protestant migrants from Ontario over the next ten years led to the expansion of the order in both Winnipeg and rural Manitoba: by 1880, twenty lodges had been established throughout the province. The association soon emerged as the most vocal opponent of Catholic and particularly

Francophone schooling rights in the province, thus representing a grave threat to the position of French Catholics in Manitoba.[25]

While the influx of Protestant settlers and expansion of the Orange Order permanently upset the sectarian balance of the province to the disadvantage of Catholicism, the Irish, as members of the English-speaking Anglo-Celtic majority, were far better positioned than the French to adapt to the new social and political order. In this regard, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba served also as an important site of cooperation between Irish Catholics and Winnipeg's emerging Anglo-Protestant elite through its English and Scottish sister associations. The Scots were the first to organize, founding the Selkirk St. Andrew's Society of Manitoba in December 1871 with Donald A. Smith, member of Parliament for Selkirk, as its first president.[26] Among those attending the association's inaugural St. Andrew's Day banquet was Dr. Curtis J. Bird, a prominent English physician and member of the Manitoba legislature, who delivered a toast on behalf of the "future St. George's Society of Manitoba."[27] This society, open to "Englishmen and descendants of Englishmen," was formally established in April 1872 with Bird elected as its first president.[28] The St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba was thus established in the broader context of Anglo-Celtic mobilization via associational activity in early Manitoba and indeed proved to be the most durable of the three. Both the St. George's and St. Andrew's Societies of Manitoba ran into unspecified difficulties in the mid-1870s and suspended operations for several years, though both were re-established on a secure footing by 1879.[29]

Through links forged with these English and Scottish societies, Winnipeg's Irish Catholics asserted their place within the broader context of British identity and imperialism. In this regard, St. Patrick's Day celebrations served a dual purpose. While morning processions, religious services and speeches emphasized the distinctly Catholic nature of the day and promoted French-Irish solidarity, the evening banquets, concerts and lectures were often used as a platform from which to promote cooperation among the province's Irish, Scots and English as well as with the French and to emphasize Ireland's loyalty to the British Empire. The venues for evening St. Patrick's Day events were decorated to represent various nationalities and displayed the British, French, American and Canadian flags in addition to the society's own green banner.[30] St. Patrick's, St. George's and St. Andrew's Day events were typically attended by each other's representatives, and toasts to the sister societies expressed the common purpose of the Irish, English and Scots, both in Manitoba and in imperial expansion. At the 1877 St. Patrick's Day banquet, George McPhillips delivered an address which "referred to the presence of the representatives of other societies and nationalities, and expressed a hope for the continuation of the friendly sentiments now existing."[31] Thomas Connolly, a prominent member of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and future Dublin immigration agent, expressed similar sentiments on St. Patrick's Day in 1880 when he

> urged unity of purpose and action on the part of English, Irish and Scotch, with a view to the common glory of the Empire, and claimed that Irishmen wanted nothing but a fair field and no favor to enable them to maintain their places as the peers of their fellow subjects of England and Scotland.[32]

These sentiments were reciprocated at Winnipeg's annual St. George's and St. Andrew's Day banquets. In fact, imperial unity was a theme at the St. Andrew's Day dinner even before the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba was established. In 1872, for example, Chief Justice Alexander Morris praised the peace that existed among the Scots, Irish and English in building the British Empire.[33] Premier John Norquay's speech at the 1880 St. George's Day banquet drew attention to famous examples in the history of the British Empire – including the Irish Duke of Wellington, working alongside English and Scottish compatriots towards the common goal of imperial greatness – that "afford[ed] to men of the three great component parts of that Empire the greatest amount of pride."[34] For English, Scottish and Irish societies in Winnipeg, it was old-world ties and the common bonds of empire that provided the social and cultural basis for unity in Manitoba's first decade.

Irish Catholic claims to solidarity with Britain and empire, however, were complicated by events in the Irish homeland with the outbreak of the Land War of 1879-82 and its campaign of rural agitation and violence to force the British government to undertake comprehensive land reform in Ireland.[35] Though led by the Protestant Charles Parnell, the movement was driven by the Catholic peasantry and widely viewed in Britain as another Fenian-like manifestation of violent Catholic nationalism. The British media portrayed the Land War as a revolutionary movement directed at achieving Irish independence, a perspective shared by the editorial pages of the Winnipeg *Daily Free Press*, which regularly denounced the Land League's campaign of rural violence through 1880 and 1881.[36] This atmosphere of heightened political tension complicated efforts by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba to reconcile a strictly Catholic identity with a broader Anglo-Celtic imperialism, as Irish

Catholicism became increasingly associated with the nationalist politics of the Irish homeland.

There is little evidence to suggest that members of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba openly supported militant Irish nationalism. The association did not publicly endorse Parnell or the Land War, nor did it ever suggest that British policy in Ireland in the 1870s was anything but wise and benevolent. At times, however, speakers at society events condemned historic British misrule in Ireland, and by doing so, might have been following a strategy employed by the Irish elsewhere in the diaspora to attack contemporary British domination of Ireland while hoping to avoid accusations of disloyalty. As research on the Irish in nineteenth-century Australia has shown, for example, nationalists were careful to praise movements that were decades old while simultaneously distancing themselves from those currently active. Thus, in the mid-nineteenth century, speakers at St. Patrick's Day events in Australia honoured eighteenth-century revolutionary hero Theobold Wolfe Tone and condemned the Young Ireland movement for its misguided and destructive uprising in 1848.[37] Three similar incidents in Winnipeg suggest a contested relationship between the Irish identity projected by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and the politics of the Irish homeland. While society leaders emphasized a shared Britishness and common purpose with Scottish and English elites, these episodes point to a subcurrent of Irish nationalism in the association, which, while never dominant, surfaced in the atmosphere of heightened tension in 1879-81 and sometimes sparked a backlash.

The first incident occurred during the society's St. Patrick's Day celebrations in 1879 when M.A. Leeson, delivering the oration of the day to society members after

High Mass, condemned the "vicious system of governmental support" for the suppression of Roman Catholic rights from the seventeenth through the early nineteenth centuries. Leeson referenced the Penal Laws, passed in Ireland between 1692 and 1727 and not repealed until 1832, which codified the inequality of Roman Catholics into law. He also detailed how Irish Catholics had been forced to endure the "rod of the oppressor" and "torch of the destroyer" over the course of hundreds of years.[38] Leeson closed, however, by claiming that the Irish had overcome these obstacles and now enjoyed the prospect of a glorious future. This particular oration did not spark a public backlash, possibly because it was delivered at the society's headquarters to members rather than to a wider audience. Response to two other speeches sponsored by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, however, illustrates the extent to which the local political climate would not tolerate even mild expressions of Irish nationalism in a more public setting. The first occasion occurred in August 1880 when the society held a concert to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of Daniel O'Connell, the Irish nationalist leader who had led the successful campaign for Catholic emancipation in the 1820s and 1830s. The concert included an oration on O'Connell's life, which began with a long narration of British misrule in Ireland up through the early nineteenth century. The orator was booed off the stage, unable to finish his lecture subsequently described by the *Daily Free Press* as "anti-British twaddle."[39] The second incident arose because of an oration on the Battle of Fontenoy, at which mercenary Irish Catholic soldiers had defeated the British army during the War of the Austrian Succession, delivered at the society's 1881 St. Patrick's Day concert.[40] The speaker was identified in newspaper coverage only as

E.A. Mackay; whether he was a member of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba or an invited guest speaker is unclear, though no one with that surname appears at any time in the list of society officers.[41] Regardless, the address drew the ire of both of Winnipeg's daily newspapers. The *Daily Free Press* commented that the selection was inappropriate and tasteless, an opinion echoed by the *Winnipeg Daily Times*, which stressed that a Winnipeg audience "cannot be expected to tolerate pieces breathing the sentiment of disloyalty."[42]

Strategies designed to express limited support for Irish nationalism while evading accusations of anti-British sentiment thus failed in the increasingly hostile atmosphere of early 1880s Winnipeg, and the negative response generated by these two events reveals little tolerance for any expressions of Irish Catholic nationalism. This factor likely contributed to the decline of the society, which remained active through November 1881 but held no annual meeting the following January and hosted no St. Patrick's Day celebration in March 1882.[43] Despite the society's demise, George McPhillips organized a St. Patrick's Day banquet in Winnipeg in 1883 reminiscent of earlier celebrations: the presence of St. Andrew's, St. George's and St. Jean-Baptiste officers, a musical program, and toasts and speeches praising interethnic harmony.[44] The event, however, revealed strong tensions within the city's Irish Catholic population that point to another likely source of the society's downfall. Several prominent Irish Catholics and leading members of the old society, including Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell, Daniel Carey and John Haverty, refused to attend the event - according to one correspondent to the *Winnipeg Daily Times* because it was organized by a "narrow-minded little clique…who consider none but Catholics worthy of being called Irishmen." The correspondent further claimed that this attitude, promoted by what he called the "McPhillips clique," was responsible for the collapse of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba.[45] The editor of the *Daily Times* sharply criticized the banquet organizers for holding a St. Patrick's Day event in the midst of a renewed Fenian dynamite campaign in England, arguing that Winnipeg's Irish should instead take some time to ask God to purge "the devil from many of their countrymen."[46] A second correspondent condemned the event organizers for supporting Irish terrorism and refusing to drink a toast to Queen Victoria.[47]

Available evidence thus suggests that some leading members of Winnipeg's Irish Catholic community increasingly rejected a narrow sectarian vision of Irish identity by the early 1880s. The balance that the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba had maintained through the 1870s between an emphasis on Catholic solidarity and identification with Anglo-Protestants became progressively more challenging to sustain by 1880-81. The hostile public atmosphere in Winnipeg, heightened by political tension in the Irish homeland, complicated efforts to articulate a vision of Catholic Irishness compatible with British imperialism and loyalty. At the same time, it became increasingly difficult for Irish Catholics to simultaneously celebrate solidarity with Francophone coreligionists and close ties with Anglo-Celtic Protestants, given the fundamental assimilative threat the latter posed to the former. Burdened by these contradictions, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba's vision of Irish Catholic identity yielded to a broader vision of Irishness and associational activity with a more inclusive mandate.

Non-Sectarian Irishness

The early 1880s saw the emergence of a new variant of Irish associational culture in Winnipeg that emphasized non-sectarian harmony and national unity. This vision of Irishness would dominate Irish society activity for the balance of the century and was reflected in the establishment of two new associations: the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society (1883-87) and the St. Patrick's Society (1889, 1892-95). The activities of these non-sectarian societies reflected an emergent regional consciousness among Irish associational leaders who sought to extend their influence in the Manitoba hinterland while publicly celebrating the centrality of the Irish in the past, present and future development of western Canada. Winnipeg's leading Irish citizens also solidified their claim to municipal leadership by expanding their charitable work for Irish and non-Irish recipients alike, thus contributing to the general welfare of the city. While the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba had reflected an Irish Catholic middle class trying to strengthen its position in a rapidly changing and crystallizing society, the rhetoric and actions of the non-sectarian societies of the 1880s and 1890s reflected the extent to which Irish associational culture had come under the domination of an Irish business and professional class far more confident of their place at the top of the province's social, economic and political hierarchy. These societies became platforms from which the Irish laid claim to regional leadership, publicly articulating a vision of Irishness that celebrated the group's contributions to regional prosperity, as well as to the broader development of the Prairie West.

This regional consciousness manifested itself in non-sectarian terms because it served the Irish group and often personal interests of Catholic and Protestant leaders alike to unite across religious boundaries. For Irish Catholics, the primary issue remained the same as it had been in the 1870s: determining the extent to which their interests were best served by an alliance with French coreligionists versus fostering closer ties with Anglo-Celtic Protestants. The establishment of non-sectarian Irish associations was a clear indication that by the early 1880s Winnipeg's Irish Catholics had decisively chosen the latter position and largely abandoned Catholic solidarity across linguistic lines. Irish Protestants had different questions and priorities. As a core element of the linguistic, religious and cultural majority in Manitoba, Irish Protestants did not feel a compelling need to establish associations for the advancement or protection of their group interests and had shown little interest in Irish associational activity in the previous decade. By the early 1880s, however, local, regional and international circumstances had evolved in such a way as to make membership in non-sectarian Irish societies attractive to an increasing number of Winnipeg's Irish Protestants. The balance of this section examines the emergence of a regional Irish identity, its development and articulation along non-sectarian lines and, finally, the disintegration of this cross-denominational consensus in the mid-1890s.

The earliest manifestations of non-sectarian cooperation came in the first months of 1880 when leading members of Winnipeg's Irish community, both Catholic and Protestant, worked together on a charitable campaign to raise funds for the relief of distress in Ireland. In January, Archbishop Taché received an appeal for aid from the Bishop of Elphin in County Sligo, who warned that massive crop failure and economic collapse had raised the prospect of famine in western Ireland.[48] The St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba responded by organizing a public meeting to establish an Irish relief committee and calling upon civic and provincial politicians for their support.[49] The results were impressive: Mayor Alexander Logan chaired the committee, while all twelve aldermen headed subcommittees to oversee fundraising efforts in Winnipeg. Key members of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, including Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell, Daniel Carey, Thomas Connolly, and president John Haverty, played leading roles. Senior executive officers from the city's Scottish and English societies – among them the St. Andrew's Society president, A.G.B. Bannatyne, and the St. George's Society president and vice-president, Gilbert McMicken and E.G. Conklin, respectively – also lent their assistance to the campaign.[50]

Most critically, the relief committee was welcomed by individual Irish Protestants in Winnipeg who worked jointly with Irish Catholics on a project for the benefit of the Irish homeland. Foremost among these men was former Winnipeg mayor Thomas Scott. The son of Irish Protestant immigrants, Scott was born in Lanark County, Canada West, in 1841 and arrived in Manitoba as part of the Wolseley Expedition in 1870. After his discharge from the army in 1874, Scott entered politics, serving as mayor of Winnipeg from 1876 to 1878 and subsequently as Winnipeg's representative in the provincial legislature. In the latter capacity, he tabled a resolution in February 1880 calling on the assembly to express its sympathy for the plight of the Irish peasantry; Scott also personally raised over two hundred dollars for the relief fund from his fellow members.[51] A second Irish Protestant to join the committee was Col. William Osborne Smith, commander of the Winnipeg-based Military District no. 10. Smith had served in the British army during the Crimean War before immigrating to Canada and had a personal history of combating militant Irish nationalists, having led the Canadian forces defending the Quebec border against Fenian incursions in 1866 and 1870. He was named deputy adjutant-general for Manitoba and the North-West Territories in 1872 and remained in command of the militia in Winnipeg until 1881.[52] Another prominent member of the committee was Stewart Mulvey, whose home county of Sligo was hit particularly hard by the agricultural crisis. The participation of Mulvey brought to the relief effort one of the region's most powerful Orangemen, though the extent to which the Order was involved in the campaign is unclear.[53]

The achievements of the relief committee were impressive and clearly demonstrated the metropolitan reach that Winnipeg's Irish could exercise when working together with other members of the political and economic elite of the city and province. While based in the Manitoba capital, the campaign extended well into the surrounding countryside, with subcommittees established in larger centres such as St. Boniface, Emerson, and Portage la Prairie, as well as smaller rural communities such as Morris, Totogan, Dundas, Rockwell, Greenmere and High Bluff.[54] St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba president John Haverty also used his position as a Canadian Pacific Railway contractor to set up relief subcommittees among Irish labourers employed on railway construction east of Winnipeg, including those working near Rat Portage and Cross Lake.[55] Collectively, the work of all the relief subcommittees, in Winnipeg and throughout the province, raised over $2,500 for the campaign by the summer of 1880.[56]

The experience of the relief committee represented an important turning point in the history of Irish associational activity in Winnipeg. Irish Protestants, absent from Irish associational activity in the 1870s, had joined a campaign committed to the welfare of Ireland. In doing so, participating Irish Protestants were at once choosing to publicly identify as Irish and demonstrating a strong emotional connection to the homeland. The relief campaign also acted as a catalyst for a larger shift in Irish associational culture, setting the stage for further cooperation across sectarian boundaries. At the same time it was initiating plans to establish the relief committee, the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba resolved to invite all Irish, regardless of religion, to participate in society affairs "in order to divest it of any appearance of sectarianism."[57] The announcement clearly demonstrated that there were many within the society in favour of moving towards greater cooperation with Irish Protestants, despite the indications that this sentiment was not unanimous. The accusation by the anonymous correspondent to the *Winnipeg Daily Times* in March 1883 that the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba had been undermined by a clique who viewed only Roman Catholics as legitimately Irish indicates that tensions over the sectarian boundaries of Irishness in the association remained to the end and helped destroy the association. Further, the backlash sparked by the allegedly anti-British speeches delivered at society events in August 1880 and March 1881 would likely have deterred Protestants from participating in society affairs. Indeed, there is no evidence of increased Irish Protestant involvement in the association's events after the invitation was issued in January 1880. While members of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba had worked successfully with Irish Protestants on the relief committee and had invited the participation of Protestants, the society thus proved a weak foundation from which to build a functioning non-sectarian association.

It was not until the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba dissolved after November 1881 that the city's Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants came together and established a non-sectarian association, the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. Founded in December 1883, it had a membership of fifty-six within a month and appears to have attracted Protestants and Roman Catholics, as well as immigrant and intergenerational Irish, in roughly equal numbers.[58] Of the twenty-seven members for whom birthplace information is available, thirteen were born in Ireland, twelve in Canada (eight in Ontario, three in Quebec and one in Nova Scotia), and one each in Scotland and India. Information on religion was available for twenty-three members, of whom thirteen were Protestant and ten Catholic. Among the society's original founding members were several men who had previously worked together on the relief committee, including Thomas Scott, who was elected the first president of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society in 1884. William J. O'Connor, Stewart Mulvey, Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell, C.R. Tuttle, and Col. William Osborne Smith were all former associates on the relief committee and founding members of the new association. Smith was elected vice-president in 1887, while the others served in various other executive offices between 1884 and 1887.[59]

The St. Patrick's Benevolent Society was established during a severe economic downturn in Manitoba, ushered in by the collapse of Winnipeg's real estate boom in 1883.[60] The new association responded to the crisis by sponsoring extensive charitable work, far surpassing the benevolent activities of the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba. At its first annual meeting, for example, the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society reported that it had established a soup kitchen that was feeding upwards of seventy-five people a day; medical and food assistance was being given to several dozen families; employment had been arranged or was being arranged on the Canadian Pacific Railway line east of Port Arthur, Ontario, for hundreds of unemployed workers; and legal support was being provided for labourers allegedly denied full payment of their wages by the Souris and Rocky Mountain Railway Company. The society had also collected donations of food, clothing and blankets for the city's destitute, providing aid to English and Scottish as well as Irish immigrants.[61] These charitable efforts reflected the class dynamics of the new society. While the leadership of the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba was predominantly middle-class, the executive of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society was dominated by doctors, lawyers, politicians and wealthy businessmen. Of the twenty-eight St. Patrick's Benevolent Society executive officers for whom biographical information is available, twenty-seven were members of the business and professional classes.[62] The organization and financing of benevolent and charitable services at a critical time served the class interests of prominent Irishmen, giving them a platform from which to enhance their reputation as respectable civic leaders among both their own people and Winnipeggers at large.

In pursuit of charitable goals defined by the new society as "purely benevolent," Irish leaders in Winnipeg thus followed patterns established at the time of the relief committee, with Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants once again joined together in common cause.[63] Speakers at St. Patrick's Benevolent Society events contrasted this national and religious accord in western Canada with the disorder prevalent in "older countries," where Roman Catholics and Protestants remained locked in ancient quarrels, and suggested that the example set in the Prairie West was worthy of "emulation" by older societies.[64] Even more explicit in this regard was president Justin J. Golden, who argued in 1887 that

> it would be well for Ireland if her children at home would imitate the examples set by the society here and sink all religious differences in their common nationality.[65]

At the same event, Stewart Mulvey pointed to the "unanimity of spirit" across class, national and religious boundaries, suggesting that nowhere else in the British Empire could such harmony be found.[66] The non-sectarian mandate of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society was central to the vision of Irishness it sought to publicly project; by coming together "regardless of creeds," the association was setting an example of leadership in contributing to a new, united and ultimately superior social order in western Canada.[67]

The domination of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society by a regionally conscious elite also manifested itself in the first organized efforts to extend Irish associational activity beyond Winnipeg. The interests of the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba were by no means confined to the Manitoba capital: the society's very name suggested an identity that extended well beyond Winnipeg, and its promotion of rural colonization demonstrated a conscious effort to strengthen the position of the Irish in the surrounding hinterland. The overwhelmingly Protestant nature of Manitoba settlement outside of Winnipeg, however, precluded any possibility that the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba would establish branch societies elsewhere in the province. The successful work of the relief committee, however, had demonstrated the metropolitan reach of Winnipeg's Irish when joined across sectarian lines, and it was the establishment of the non-sectarian St. Patrick's Benevolent Society that acted as the catalyst for the expansion of Irish associational activity beyond the Manitoba capital. Within months of its foundation, the society announced that it had established divisions in Brandon and Portage la Prairie, with plans to set up another in Port Arthur.[68]

Very little information exists on these divisions, especially the one in Brandon, and it is unclear how long they lasted. Available documentation, however, points to some similarities with the parent society in Winnipeg. The society in Portage la Prairie, for example, was led by members of the professional class and focused on non-sectarian harmony during St. Patrick's Day celebrations. At the 1884 St. Patrick's Day banquet, the president and vice-president delivered speeches praising the contributions of loyal Irishmen to the British Empire, and pointed to the broad cooperation among different nationalities in regional development; representatives of the Portage la Prairie St. Andrew's and St. George's Societies were also present at the event.[69] The communities targeted by the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society for new divisions, together with the overall scope of the association's activities, which included assisting Irish railway workers in Port Arthur, testified that the association's vision of Winnipeg's hinterland would extend east as well as west.

The regional consciousness of associational leaders was also reflected in the vision of Irish identity publicly articulated at events hosted by the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, in that speeches and toasts addressed the progress and future of not only the city of Winnipeg, but also the province of Manitoba and the entire Prairie region. Such regional themes were already well represented at the association's inaugural St. Patrick's Day banquet in March 1884. In addition to standard toasts to the Queen and her representatives in Canada, to the Dominion and to the provincial legislatures, other toasts acknowledged "the learned professions," "our commercial and agricultural interests," and "the CPR from ocean to ocean" – the last toast followed up by a rendition of "for it's a mighty big railway." In his toast to the army and navy, Col. Osborne Smith declared that western Canada was "destined to be the home of a great people, situated as she was in the centre of this great Dominion" and declared that Irish immigrants would be offered the traditional Gaelic greeting of *caed mille failthe*, or one hundred thousand welcomes, in the Prairie West.[70] Stewart Mulvey pursued this theme of settlement in a speech that praised the work done by the society to attract immigrants to Manitoba, noting that it had accomplished more in this regard than "all the farmers in Manitoba."[71] This statement was a thinly-veiled condemnation of the Farmer's Union of Manitoba, an agrarian organization which had openly discouraged immigration to the province as part of a larger protest against what it perceived to be unfair federal policies in Manitoba. The organization had passed a resolution at its convention shortly before St. Patrick's Day that strongly discouraged any further immigration to the province. By drawing a comparison between the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society and the farmers' union, Mulvey was emphasizing commitment by the Irish to regional growth and development.[72]

In many respects, St. Patrick's Benevolent Society events resembled those of the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, marked by expressions of cooperation and harmony with other nationalities, anchored by exchanges of goodwill with representatives of the appropriate national societies. At St. Patrick's Day events between 1884 and 1887, for example, the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society entertained representatives from the St. George's, St. Andrew's, St. Jean-Baptiste, Jewish National and Scandinavian Societies.[73] And, as had been the case with the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba, a conscious effort was made to stress the compatibility of Irishness with a broader British identity and to celebrate the loyal contributions of the Irish to empire building. For example, David Glass, solicitor for the city of Winnipeg and the Canadian-born son of immigrants from County Armagh, delivered a speech at the 1884 St. Patrick's Benevolent Society annual banquet emphasizing Irish contributions to Britain and empire. He saluted Irish nationalist leader Daniel O'Connell for the achievement of Catholic Emancipation in 1832, but tellingly he did so by citing it as an example of how Irish politicians had "rendered illustrious service in the English House of Commons." Glass also singled out military figures such as Lord Wolseley and Admiral Seymour as examples of Irish heroes who had served the cause of empire with distinction. Finally, he praised the former governor-general of Canada, Earl Dufferin, who had "crowned the British nation with glory" with his distinguished service as a diplomat, a highly symbolic choice for Winnipeg Irishmen because of Dufferin's central role in the negotiations ending the Red River resistance.[74] Given the accusations levied against the earlier St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba of anti-British sentiment, such expressions of devotion to Great Britain were crucial in order to distance the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society from any possible charges of sympathy for Irish nationalism.

Indeed, there is little indication that the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society offered substantial support for the Home Rule movement, which, by the mid-1880s, had gained widespread popularity and respectability in Canada as a result of the public rehabilitation of Irish nationalist leader Charles Parnell and the advance of his parliamentary campaign for Home Rule. Parnell's reconciliation with British Prime Minister William Gladstone and his abandonment of rural agitation in favour of constitutional negotiation won him tremendous support among the Irish in Canada, and indeed throughout the diaspora. As Brian Clarke notes, for example, Irish Protestants in Toronto became increasingly receptive to the Protestant Parnell and his Home Rule campaign in the 1880s.[75] While Canada's ill-timed expression of support for Home Rule just prior to the Phoenix Park Murders in 1882 was the source of some embarrassment for the country's Irish, Parnell and his Home Rule campaign remained widely popular in Canada throughout the balance of the 1880s.

The response of Winnipeg's Irish to Parnell's campaign in the 1880s, however, was largely one of indifference. Society president Justin J. Golden offered best wishes to Parnell in his 1886 St. Patrick's Day address and would later praise the Irish nationalist leader as one of modern Ireland's leading political figures, but otherwise the issue of Home Rule received little attention at society events.[76] Further, there is no indication that Parnell's newfound popularity acted as a catalyst for growth in the society's membership, especially amongst Irish Protestants. The only major figure in the society to endorse Parnell openly was Golden, a Roman Catholic, and there are no indications that major Protestant figures such as Thomas Scott, Stewart Mulvey or William Osborne Smith lent their support to the Home Rule movement. The reason for the society's lukewarm response to Parnell's campaign is unclear, though very likely related to the broader history of Irish associational activity in the city. Apparent divisions within the ranks of the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba over homeland politics had contributed to its demise, and the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society's firm determination to operate on a strictly non-political basis, part of its broader agenda of fostering 'unanimity of spirit' in western Canada, ensured that Home Rule would remain a relatively peripheral issue for the association during the 1880s.

While those in control of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society shared a core conviction that Irish associational culture should emphasize non-sectarian harmony, Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics approached their participation in the association in different contexts. Irish Protestants had no history of involvement in Irish societies in Winnipeg prior to the formation of the relief committee, and as had been the situation in the 1870s, the Orange Order remained the most important fraternal and benevolent association for Protestants in Winnipeg. The number of Irish Protestants, immigrant and intergenerational, belonging to the Orange Order in the 1880s is unknown, but it certainly would have been far greater than the number who belonged to the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, whose membership never reached more than three hundred, and whose Protestant membership was likely no more than half that total. By the time the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society was established in December 1883, there were already five active Orange lodges in Winnipeg.[77] The presence of prominent Orangemen such as Scott and Mulvey in the ranks of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society hints at some cross-pollination in membership, though the number who belonged to both organizations cannot be determined with available evidence. The continued strength of the Orange Order in the Manitoba capital could, however, offer some further insight into why Protestant involvement in Irish associational activity manifested along non-sectarian lines. The Orange Order undoubtedly attracted those Irish Protestants who identified most strongly with British loyalism and their Protestant faith, rendering a sectarian Irish Protestant society redundant. Conversely, the growth of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society suggests that for some Irish, at least, sectarianism was not central to their vision of Irish identity. Membership in one did not preclude participation in the other, however, as each organization offered a different variant of associational culture.

For Irish Catholics, the emergence of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society represented a relatively clean break from the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba by a new group of prominent Irish Catholics who rejected the narrow sectarian vision of the old guard. Some of the Irish Catholics involved in the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society did have links to the previous association, as well as to the relief committee; they included Dr. John Harrison O'Donnell, P.J. Fortune and William J. O'Connor. Others – such as Justin J. Golden (president, 1885-87), Henry J. Clarke (vice-president, 1885-87), Michael Conway, John E. Wright, Daniel Carey and Thomas D. Deegan (various executive offices, 1884-87) – had previously taken no part in associational activity. Most of these individuals belonged to the business and professional classes. Deegan, for example, was a clothing and furniture merchant, while Carey and Clarke were both lawyers; Clarke was also active in politics and had been premier of Manitoba between 1872 and 1874.[78] Some of these individuals were recent arrivals to Winnipeg. Golden, for example, had migrated from Ontario in 1880, Deegan from Quebec in 1882.[79] Others, including Carey and Clarke, had settled in Winnipeg in the early 1870s but had taken no role in the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba. The case of Clarke is notable because he had participated in Irish associational activity prior to his arrival in Manitoba, having been a prominent member of the Hibernian Society of Montreal in the 1860s. Clarke had led an effort to purge that association's membership of those with links to the militant Fenian Brotherhood, which had infiltrated the ranks of the Hibernian Society by the mid-1860s. The effort failed, and Clarke would later be assaulted by a Fenian in Chicago.[80] Given his turbulent personal history, it is perhaps not surprising that Clarke avoided Irish associational activity in Winnipeg until the emergence of the explicitly non-sectarian St. Patrick's Benevolent Society.

A new group of Irish Catholic leaders was thus laying claim to the right to publicly define Irish identity, abandoning the group's traditional emphasis on the intimate relationship between Irishness and Catholicism. In doing so, Winnipeg's Irish Catholics were embracing a new strategy to defend their position in western Canada. As Raymond Huel notes in conjunction with his study of Archbishop Taché, Manitoba's Irish Catholics were deeply conscious of their vulnerability in late nineteenth-century western Canada, leading them to increasingly disassociate themselves from any strong association with French or other non-Anglophone Catholics.[81] The clearest example of this shift in attitude was the pressure placed by Irish Catholics on the archbishop of St. Boniface to appoint more Anglophone clergy to minister to Winnipeg's English-speaking, and overwhelmingly Irish, Catholic population. The city's first Anglophone parish, St. Mary's, was established in 1876, and the continued growth of Winnipeg's Irish Catholic population resulted in the creation of a second Anglophone parish, Immaculate Conception, seven years later. This move, however, was not accompanied by an increase in English-speaking clergy, whom Taché claimed were unavailable.[82] His failure to respond effectively to Irish Catholic demands on this key issue continued to be a key source of tension between the two communities through the 1880s, so much so that Winnipeg's Irish Catholics refused to cooperate with their French counterparts in defence of Catholic school rights in Manitoba in the 1890s. While demanding state-funded Catholic schools, they lent little assistance to Francophones fighting to ensure that such education would be available in the French language. By the late nineteenth century, many of Winnipeg's Irish Catholic leaders had concluded that their interests were better served through accommodation with Anglophone Protestants than through solidarity with French Catholics.[83] The emergence of non-sectarian Irish associational culture was symbolic of this new direction.

Many French Catholics viewed this move towards non-sectarian Irish unity with alarm, a sentiment expressed clearly through the pages of the largest Catholic newspaper in western Canada, the *Northwest Review*. Though published in English, the newspaper was under the direction through the late nineteenth century of French clergy, who voiced their opposition to the establishment of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. A January 1886 editorial, for example, rejected the notion that Protestants had any legitimate claim to Irish identity, arguing that only an association comprised exclusively of Catholics could be truly Irish. The editorial also maintained that the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society had fallen under the control of Orangemen, a rather dubious claim given that its president and vice-president at the time, Justin J. Golden and Henry J. Clarke, were both prominent Catholics. The editorial closed by calling upon Catholics to collectively withdraw from the society and join an existing Catholic fraternal association such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, an appeal it would repeat some years later.[84] Neither call met with any apparent success as Irish associational activity remained organized along non-sectarian lines for the remainder of the nineteenth century, reflecting broader trends in the evolution of Irish-French relations.

The confidence and assertiveness so prevalent in non-sectarian Irish associational culture during the 1880s, however, was lacking a decade later. After lapsing in 1888, the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society was reformed prior to St. Patrick's Day 1889 by longtime Manitoba resident Dr. John Pennefather. It dissolved within a year, and although Pennefather would try a second time to reorganize it in 1892, he had no more success, and it would not be until the establishment of the St. Patrick's Society in 1893 that non-sectarian Irish associational culture was once again placed on relatively stable ground.[85] Like the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, the new society was dominated by the professional and business classes and included many prominent members of the association it replaced, such as Justin J. Golden, Joseph Carey, Thomas D. Deegan and John E. Wright. Also like its predecessor, the new society was explicitly non-sectarian and promoted Manitoba as a land of sectarian harmony, contrasting it sharply with older countries like Ireland where religious and political hatred persisted.[86] Speeches and lectures delivered at the new society's St. Patrick's Day events addressed other familiar themes as well, focusing on Irish contributions to western Canadian development. In an 1893 speech celebrating Irish military contributions to the defence and expansion of the British Empire, for example, Col. G.F. Brophy identified the Prairie West as a site where the Irish had distinguished themselves in the British military, presumably referencing the Northwest Rebellion.[87] Other speakers on that occasion praised the specifically regional contributions of the Irish. Mayor Thomas Taylor drew attention to the role played by the Irish in political life, mentioning in particular the number of Irish who had served in Winnipeg's civic administration since the city's incorporation.[88]

Underlying these familiar themes, however, was a defensiveness absent from events hosted by the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society in the 1880s. In 1892, for example, John Pennefather challenged critics who objected to the formation of the St. Patrick's Society "on the grounds that [its members] were not Irish but Canadian;" Pennefather insisted that by paying homage to the land of their birth, members were in no way compromising their loyalty to Canada.[89] One year later, in his toast to Queen Victoria, president Archer Martin complained that Irishmen were unfairly charged with disloyalty to Britain when they had room in their hearts for devotion to both the "land of their birth" and the "land of their allegiance."[90] Two years later, vice-president J.W.S. Lowry, who had immigrated to Canada from County Down in

1889, took issue with those who argued that immigrants should abandon their old-world identities, insisting instead that it "would be high treason and baseness for any Irishmen to go back on the land that gave them birth."[91] What is most notable about these examples is that Lowry, Martin and Pennefather were all Protestants; accusations of Irish disloyalty were no longer limited, as they had been in the past, to Roman Catholics.

Though the St. Patrick's Society, like the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, took little open interest in the politics of the Irish homeland, hostility against public expressions of Irish identity may have reflected an anti-Irish public backlash in the wake of the collapse of Parnell's Home Rule movement. Revelations of the Irish nationalist leader's adulterous affair with Katherine O'Shea divided Irish members of the Irish Parliamentary Party into pro- and anti-Parnell factions, dealing a severe blow to the movement, which stumbled forward until the final defeat of Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill in the British House of Lords in 1893.[92] Further, public hostility against members of the St. Patrick's Society for their expressions of old-world identity likely reflected the growing consensus among Anglophone Protestants that Manitoba must be made "a British and Canadian province," which led to a sustained attack on Francophone and Catholic schooling rights.[93] Despite continued insistence that devotion to Ireland in no way compromised loyalty to Canada and empire, Irish associational activity went against the grain of Manitoba's assimilationist culture in the 1890s and the prevailing belief that clinging to a parochial ethnic heritage inhibited the growth of a strong Canadian nationality. In the face of such public pressure, the St. Patrick's Society dissolved after St. Patrick's Day 1895, bringing non-sectarian Irish associational activity to an end for over a decade.

Protestant Ascendancy

While enthusiasm for non-sectarian Irish societies was largely spent by 1895, events overseas would spark a renewed interest among Irish Protestants in associational activity, though this time along sectarian lines. The catalyst came in 1900 with Queen Victoria's announcement that Irish soldiers serving in the British army would be permitted to wear shamrocks on their uniforms on St. Patrick's Day in recognition of their service in the Boer War. She followed this declaration with a royal visit to Ireland, her first since the Great Famine.[94] Nationalists in Ireland denounced the Queen's gesture as an unwelcome appropriation of Ireland's national symbol, but the move was widely commended in Canada, by both the Irish and the general population, as a wise token of the monarch's recognition of Irish loyalty, devotion and service to empire.[95] With a single gesture, Queen Victoria had given royal sanction to public expressions of Irish identity, restoring the crucial link between Irishness and imperial loyalty that had been brought into question by the fall of Parnell and the failure of the Home Rule movement.

Winnipeg's Irish Protestants responded through the establishment of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association, which met monthly at Winnipeg's Orange Hall, suggesting a strong link with the Orange Order. The association held its inaugural St. Patrick's Day banquet in 1900, and within a year had a membership of two hundred.[96] Members of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association wholeheartedly embraced imperialism as the primary nexus of their identity, situating themselves within an international diaspora contributing to the defence of the British Empire. Irish Catholics, for their part, remained sidelined in terms of organized Irishness; while Roman Catholic associations such as the Catholic Club hosted St. Patrick's Day concerts, no effort was made by Irish Catholics to establish another specifically Irish association. Winnipeg's Irish Protestants thus laid exclusive claim to Irish associational culture in the first several years of the twentieth century, eschewing the reformation of a non-sectarian society in favour of an exclusively Protestant vision of Irishness. The Irish Protestant Benevolent Association asserted a very strong public presence. Its march from its headquarters to Holy Trinity Church for St. Patrick's Day services in 1901 was the first public procession held by an Irish national society in Winnipeg since the late 1870s, and the first ever by an exclusively Irish Protestant organization.[97]

Complete membership information is not extant, but the list of executive officers for the society in 1900-01 reveals a strong Irish immigrant presence among its leadership. Thomas M. Hamill (honorary president), Stewart Mulvey (president), R.J. Whitla (second vice president) and Matthew Hozak (treasurer) were all born in Ireland, and only vice-president John M. O'Loughlin was born in Canada.[98] Though Irish associational activity had shifted from a non-sectarian to an exclusively Protestant basis, it continued to be dominated by members of the merchant and professional classes. Hamill was from Belfast and arrived in Winnipeg in the summer of 1899 to take a position at Manitoba College.[99] Whitla was born in County Monaghan in 1846 and arrived in Winnipeg in 1879 after several years' residence in New York and eastern Canada. He was a prominent merchant, entering the wholesale trade shortly after his arrival in Manitoba. John Miles O'Loughlin, was born in Canada West in 1846 and moved to Winnipeg in 1881 with his brother. The pair would enter business together, opening a wholesale stationary firm.[100]

Though Protestants monopolized Irish associational activity in the first years of the twentieth century, they also viewed the Boer War as holding the potential to forge closer ties between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants along the lines of imperial service. Speeches at Irish Protestant Benevolent Association events celebrated Ireland's "unfailing zeal for the cause of the empire," and predicted that the war would not only usher in a new era of national reconciliation, but also strengthen ties between Ireland and Great Britain.[101] H.W.A. Chambre, himself an Irish immigrant and one of Winnipeg's most prominent merchants, toasted the "imperial spirit of the age" at the association's inaugural banquet; praising the "amalgamation of the Anglo-Saxon race and the Celt united in closer bonds of the broad British Empire," he expressed his hope that Irishmen would overcome "differences of religion and politics" and come together as a "united nation and one true and loyal people."[102] At the 1903 banquet, Rev. Forrester of Morris, Manitoba, assured members that "loyalty for the British empire was a national sentiment" in Ireland and insisted that the "South African War [had] shown that Ireland [had] done her duty." He closed by congratulating those assembled for coming "together to celebrate St. Patrick's Day thrilled with patriotic fervor for the mother land."[103] In the same vein, the association invited Thomas Deegan, now president of the Catholic Club, to its banquet in 1900; the former activist in the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society delivered a speech praising non-sectarian unity on Ireland's national day.[104]

The Boer War, however, proved an unstable foundation upon which to construct a vision of Irish identity based on national reconciliation and imperial service. Hailed enthusiastically at the outset as a glorious imperial adventure, the conflict soon became a quagmire and a major embarrassment for the British as Boer forces fought the much larger British army to a stalemate for several years. Further, Irish nationalists quickly embraced the Boer cause, lending both moral and physical support, with hundreds of Irish volunteers travelling to South Africa to fight as a brigade in the Boer army.[105] Frustration with such nationalist activity surfaced in a 1903 speech by Rev. Forester, who condemned the "agitation of certain unscrupulous politicians" in Ireland during Britain's time of crisis.[106] Embracing the Boer War as the basis of national reconciliation became increasingly difficult as the conflict dragged on, sapping the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association of much of its momentum.

After a promising start, the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association fell quickly into decline. Attendance its annual St. Patrick's Day event fell to around 150 in 1904, and the association disbanded soon after.[107] Its close links to the Orange Order, which continued to serve as the primary fraternal and benevolent association for city Protestants regardless of ethnic origin, perhaps made a separate Irish organization somewhat redundant. The dissolution of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association brought to an end the third stage of Irish associational activity in Winnipeg in this period, with no Irish associations, Catholic, Protestant, or non-sectarian, active in the city by 1905.

Conclusion

The emergence of Irish associations in Winnipeg between 1874 and 1904 represented an effort by the city's Irish to negotiate their position in a rapidly evolving frontier society. Irish society activity took several forms in this period, reflecting the particular sectarian and class interests of associational leaders, but most were harnessed to promote the position of the Irish as Winnipeg's, and western Canada's, leading citizens. While issues such as the Home Rule movement, rising political tension with Britain, and imperial crises such as the Boer War would exercise influence at particular times, the primary focus of Winnipeg's Irish societies was rarely directed on the Irish homeland. Rather, the primary objective of these societies was to strengthen the position of the Irish in regional development and to prove, in the words of Rev. Dean O'Meara in 1892, that the Irish were a "valuable addition to Canada" and that the Irishman was a "good and patriotic citizen."[108]

Though none of these associations lasted beyond 1904, Irish associational activity in this period laid the foundation for what would emerge in the remaining years before the Great War. The key themes which dominated Irish identity between 1874 and 1904 would continue to resonate into the first decades of the twentieth century and the variants of Irish associational culture, which would emerge from 1907 onward, were informed by the Catholic and non-sectarian visions of Irishness articulated by societies such as the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. The Protestant vision of Irishness, which found strong expression through the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association, proved to be an aberration born out of the unique circumstance of the Boer War. Protestants would continue to participate in Irish associational activity after 1904, emphasizing the intimate relationship between Irishness and imperial loyalty, but they would do so through non-sectarian rather than exclusively Protestant societies.

The key issue distinguishing Irish associational activity in the decade prior to the Great War from its late nineteenth-century predecessor was geographic scope. Confined almost exclusively to Winnipeg between 1874 and 1904, Irish associations would be founded in every major Prairie urban centre by 1909. This spread was a result of the rapid growth of the Irish population across the region in the early twentieth century, driven by unprecedented levels of Irish migration and immigration and fuelled by the prosperity of the wheat boom. By the first years of the twentieth century, the Irish population of the Prairie West was on the verge of a period of remarkable expansion.

Notes

[1] *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1875.
[2] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1875, 24 April 1875.
[3] T.W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of Colonial Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 98; Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 161; and Kevin James, "Dynamics of Ethnic Associational Culture in a Nineteenth-Century City: Saint Patrick's Society of Montreal, 1834-56," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 53.
[4] The traditional view that the Fenian movement commanded little support in Canada has come under scrutiny from historians of the Irish in Ontario and Quebec. See for example David Wilson, "The Fenians in Montreal, 1862-68: Invasion, Intrigue and Assassination," *Eire-Ireland* 38, no. 3-4 (Fall/Winter 2003): 109-33; and George Sheppard, "'God Save the Green': Fenianism and Fellowship in Victorian Ontario," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 39 (May 1987): 129-44.
[5] J.M. Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 151-2.
[6] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 13 March 1974; and *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1876. The total of 414 Irish Catholics is based on my counts from the *Census of Canada*, 1881.
[7] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba: A Dictionary of Manitoba Biography from the Earliest Times to 1920* (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1971), 44, 176.
[8] William L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 159, 179; and John M. Reid Jr., "The Erection of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg" (master's thesis, University of Manitoba, 1961), 4-8.
[9] Richard Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*, vol. 1, ed. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988), 404*n*3.
[10] Michael Cottrell, "John Joseph Leddy and the Battle for the Soul of the Catholic Church in the West," *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Historical Studies* (1995): 50; Terence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism and Canadianism* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 163-68; Raymond J.A. Huel, "The Irish-French Conflict in Catholic Episcopal Nominations: The Western Sees and the Struggle for Domination within the Church," Canadian Catholic Historical Association *Study Sessions* 42 (1975): 51-4; and Brian E. Rainey, "The Fransaskois and the Irish Catholics: An Uneasy Relationship," *Prairie Forum* 24:2 (Fall 1999): 211-18.
[11] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," 393; and Reid, "The Erection of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg," 8.
[12] *Daily Free Press*, 19 May 1879; Peter J. Gagné, *French-Canadians of the West: A Biographical Dictionary of French-Canadians and French Métis of the Western United States and Canada*, vol. III (Orange Park, FA: Quintin Publications, 2000), 102-05; and F.W. Russell, *History of St. Mary's Cathedral Parish, Winnipeg,*

Manitoba (Winnipeg: [n.p.], 1936), 29. Lacombe also served as minister of St. Mary's Parish for a brief time after his trip to France.

[13]; *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1876-77, 105; and Gagné, *French-Canadians of the West*, vol. 3, 27-8. The years 1876-77 are the only ones which list the society as having an official chaplain.

[14] *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1875, 15 March 1876. The *Daily Free Press* explicitly noted on 17 March 1877 that the "proposed procession accompanied by music" was cancelled on account of the poor weather. On 17 March 1881 the same newspaper commented that the Society "did not have the usual procession," suggesting that the practice had continued between 1878-80. Available records, however, make no explicit reference to it except in 1875 and 1876.

[15] Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 216.

[16] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1879.

[17] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1876.

[18] *Daily Free Press*, 18, March 1878.

[19] *Daily Free Press*, 20 March 1879.

[20] *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. "O'Connor, John."

[21] *Daily Free Press*, 12 July 1880.

[22] Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 93.

[23] Raymond J.A. Huel, *Archbishop A.-A. Taché of St. Boniface: The "Good Fight" and the Illusive Vision* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2003), 211.

[24] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1878.

[25] Hereward Senior, "Orangemen on the Frontier: The Prairies and British Columbia," in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*, vol. 1, ed. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988), 418; and Senior, *Orangeism: The Canadian Phase* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972), 78.

[26] Thomas Saunders, *A Proud Heritage: A History of the St. Andrew's Society of Winnipeg, 1871-1982* (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1982), 8-9; and *Manitoban*, 22 November 1873.

[27] For biographic information on Bird, see Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 23-4.

[28] *Manitoban*, 2 December 1871, 20 April 1872.

[29] St. Andrew's Society *Annual Report*, printed in the *Daily Free Press*, 10 November 1880. For examples of Winnipeg members attending events hosted by the Portage society, see Saunders, *A Proud Heritage*, 10; and Robert B. Hill, *Manitoba: A History of its Early Settlement, Development and Resources* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1890), 411.

[30] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1875, 18 March 1876.

[31] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1877.

[32] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1880.

[33] *Manitoban*, 7 December 1872.

[34] *Daily Free Press*, 24 April 1880.

[35] Mike Cronin, *A History of Ireland* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 158-62.

[36] For the British media on Parnell and the Land War, see Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University

of Wisconsin Press, 2004), Chapter 4. For examples of anti-Land League and anti-Parnell editorials in Winnipeg, see *Daily Free Press* 11 February 1880, 4 October 1880, 3 November 1880, 6 November 1880, 15 November 1880, 3 May 1881, 21 May 1881, 4 June 1881, 10 September 1881, 12 October 1881, 20 October 1881.

[37] Oliver MacDonagh, "Irish Culture and Nationalism Translated: St. Patrick's Day, 1888, in Australia," in *Irish Culture and Nationalism, 1750-1950*, ed. Oliver MacDonagh, W.F. Mandle and Pauric Travers (London: Macmillan, 1983), 71.

[38] *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1879.

[39] *Daily Free Press*, 7 August 1880.

[40] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1881. For a concise analysis of the participation of the Irish Brigade at Fontenoy, see Micheline Kerney Walsh, "Letters from Fontenoy," *Irish Sword* 19, no. 78 (1995): 237-45.

[41] Most newspaper coverage refers to him only as Mr. Mackay. An advertisement in the *Daily Free Press*, 14 March 1881, identifies him as E.A. Mackay.

[42] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1881; and *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 18 March 1881.

[43] *Daily Free Press*, 1 December 1881.

[44] *Daily Free Press*, 19 March 1883. It is possible that McPhillips and the committee responsible for the banquet established a new society to host the event. One of the telegrams of regret was addressed to the 'St. Patrick's Society of Winnipeg,' the only reference to such a society in the *Daily Free Press*, suggesting that McPhillips may have sought to resurrect the old society. If such a society was established for the 1883 banquet, there is no record of its incorporation in Winnipeg and no further reference to it in the available evidence.

[45] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 30 March 1883.

[46] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 16 March 1883.

[47] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 23 March 1883.

[48] *Daily Free Press*, 2 February 1880. The letter was dated 14 January 1880.

[49] *Daily Free Press*, 7 February 1880.

[50] *Daily Free Press*, 18 February 1880. The list was cross-referenced with St. George's Society and St. Andrew's Society officer lists from the *Daily Free Press* and *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1879 and 1880. The original public meeting to establish the committee was held on 6 February; the subcommittees were appointed at a subsequent meeting on 17 February.

[51] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Prominent Citizens of Manitoba*, 166; Gerald Friesen, "Homeland to Hinterland: Political Transition in Manitoba, 1870 to 1879," Canadian Historical Association *Historical Papers* (1979), 43; Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 224; and *Daily Free Press*, 18 February 1880.

[52] *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. "Smith, William Osborne;" Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, 234; and Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Prominent Citizens of Manitoba*, 220-21. Smith was certainly an immigrant, but there is some discrepancy in the sources regarding his birthplace. The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* records that he was born "apparently in 1833" in Wales. However, *Pioneers and Prominent Citizens of Manitoba* cites Ireland as his birthplace, as does the *Census of Canada*, 1881.

[53] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Prominent Citizens of Manitoba*, 166.

[54] *Daily Free Press*, 18 February 1880, 8 March 1880.

[55] *Daily Free Press*, 28 February 1880. I have used the term subcommittee to refer to all of the smaller bodies set up to oversee fundraising for the relief effort, under the ultimate direction of the Irish relief committee. There is some inconsistency in the terms used in the *Daily Free Press* when describing the campaign: for example, the bodies headed by Winnipeg's aldermen were alternatively referred to as subcommittees, ward committees, and ward Irish relief subcommittees; those set up in towns and villages in other parts of Manitoba were referred to as committees and subcommittees; while those established among the railway workers were described both as subcommittees and section committees. Subcommittee was the most commonly used term to describe all of these smaller bodies, however, and I have retained it here. See *Daily Free Press*, 23 February 1880, 24 February 1880, 28 February 1880, 6 March 1880, 8 March 1880, 13 March 1880, 29 March 1880.

[56] Two remittances of $1,000 and $1,500 were sent by the end of March 1880. Money continued to be collected through the summer of 1880, but no final total was ever published (*Daily Free Press*, 27 March 1880, 29 March 1880). The March remittances included contributions from throughout the province, reported in the *Daily Free Press* on the following dates: Rat Portage (23 February 1880); Cross Lake (5 March 1880); Morris (6 March 1880); Portage la Prairie, Totogan and High Bluff (8 March 1880); and St. Boniface (13 March 1880).

[57] *Daily Free Press*, 31 January 1880.

[58] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 19 December 1883, 30 January 1884.

[59] *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1884, 109; *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1885, 355; *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1886, 88; and *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1887, 79.

[60] Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 200-01.

[61] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 18 January 1884, 22 January 1884, 25 January 1884, 30 January 1884.

[62] Information on St. Patrick's Benevolent Society officers was taken from newspaper coverage of society meetings and St Patrick's Day events, as well as from the *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1883 through 1887. Occupational classifications adapted from Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 261-62.

[63] The goals of the new society were defined as "purely benevolent" at its first meeting in December 1883. See *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 19 December 1883.

[64] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1884.

[65] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1887.

[66] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1887.

[67] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1885.

[68] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 11 March 1884.

[69] *Portage la Prairie Weekly Review*, 18 March 1884.

[70] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1884.

[71] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 18 March 1884.

[72] *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 18 March 1884; and Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 210-12.

[73] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1884, and 18 March 1887.

[74] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1884.

[75] Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*, 228-30. For examples of support for Parnell in Irish communities elsewhere in the diaspora, see Timothy J. Meagher, *Inventing Irish America: Generation, Class, and Ethnic Identity in a New England City, 1880-1928* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 196; and Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St. Patrick's Day* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 90-91.

[76] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1886, 19 March 1889.

[77] Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Immigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 222; and Senior, "Orangemen on the Frontier," 419.

[78] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba*, 44, 50, 65-6.

[79] *Winnipeg Tribune* 11 November 1931; and Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba*, 65.

[80] Hereward Senior, "Quebec and the Fenians," *Canadian Historical Review* 48, no. 1 (1967): 30-31. See also David Wilson, "The Fenians in Montreal, 1862-68," 109-33.

[81] Huel, *Archbishop A.-A. Taché of St. Boniface*, 256.

[82] Huel, *Archbishop A.-A. Taché of St. Boniface*,, 218; and Rev. A.G. Morice, *History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada From Lake Superior to the Pacific (1659-1895)*, vol. II (Toronto: Musson, 1910), 152. By 1885, ninety-five percent of Manitoba's English-speaking Catholic population was Irish. See Richard Davis, "Irish Catholics and the Manitoba School Crisis, 1885-1921," *Eire-Ireland* 8, no. 3 (1973): 29-64.

[83] Huel, "The Irish-French Conflict in Catholic Episcopal Nominations," 52.

[84] *Northwest Review*, 30 January 1886, 18 September 1886, 20 February 1889. See also Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," 394-96.

[85] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1893.

[86] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 16 March 1895.

[87] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1893.

[88] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1893, 19 March 1894.

[89] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1892.

[90] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1893.

[91] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 19 March 1894. Biographical information on Lowry taken from *Winnipeg Tribune,* 16 March 1895.

[92] Cronin, *A History of Ireland*, 164-65.

[93] Morton, *Manitoba: A History*, 245.

[94] Cronin and Adair, *The Wearing of the Green*, 98-99.

[95] For examples, see *Edmonton Bulletin*, 19 March 1900; *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 March 1900; *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1900; *Calgary Weekly Herald*, 22 March 1900; and *Victoria Daily Times*, 17 March 1900.

[96] *Winnipeg Morning Telegram*, 18 March 1900; and *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1901.

[97] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1901.

[98] List of executive officers taken from *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1900-01, 32. Hamill was listed in the directory as being from Belfast. Biographical

information on the others from the following: Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba,* 166 (Mulvey) and 178-79 (O'Loughlin); *Census of Canada* (1891), Winnipeg City district, ward 2, B1 (Whitla) and ward 5, E3 (Hozak). Information on two other executive members (J. Thompson Black and Robert S. Dollard) was unavailable.

[99] *Winnipeg Morning Telegram*, 18 March 1903.

[100] Manitoba Library Association, *Pioneers and Early Citizens of Manitoba*, 178, 252-53.

[101] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 19 March 1900.

[102] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 19 March 1900; and *Daily Free Press*, 19 March 1900.

[103] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1903; *Winnipeg Morning Telegram*, 18 March 1903; and *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1903.

[104] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1900.

[105] Cronin and Adair, *The Wearing of the Green*, 98-99.

[106] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1903; and *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1903.

[107] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1904.

[108] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1892.

Chapter Three

Irish Immigration, Migration and Settlement in Western Canada in the Early Twentieth Century

This chapter examines Irish immigration, migration and settlement patterns in the Prairie West in the first three decades of the twentieth century in both rural and urban contexts. The years of the wheat boom prior to the Great War saw an unprecedented expansion of western Canada's Irish population, and while the migration of intergenerational Irish from central and eastern Canada continued to dominate new arrivals, the period was also marked by two other notable developments. The first was the movement of thousands of Irish from the United States to the Prairie West in the early 1900s as land-hungry settlers responded to the closing of the American frontier by moving north to the 'last best west.' The second was a sharp increase in emigration from Ireland, and more particularly Ulster, which brought thousands of new Irish immigrants to the region. As had been the case in the late nineteenth century, Irish settlement during the wheat boom years continued to be predominantly rural, though the Irish also established a strong presence in emerging urban centres. It was also in this period that Winnipeg reinforced its status as the regional Irish metropolis, particularly for Irish immigrants.

The end of the wheat boom and the outbreak of the Great War brought to a close this dramatic expansion of Irish settlement and population growth. However, with the 1920s came a renewal of Irish immigration in response to depressed economic conditions and sectarian violence in Ireland. The overall Irish population of western Canada continued to grow in the 1920s, but migration appears to have played an increasingly less significant role than it had at any time since the Prairie

West was opened for agricultural settlement in the 1870s. While a lack of detailed census data makes a precise calculation impossible, the steady decline of the total Ontario-born population of western Canada in the postwar years suggests that the growth of the region's Irish population in the 1920s was likely more a result of natural increase than renewed migration.

The nature of Irish settlement in this period, driven by three separate Irish population streams, requires some clarification of terminology at the outset. Those coming to the Prairie West from the United States will be referred to as continental migrants; though technically immigrants, these Irish were part of a much larger North American population movement quite distinct from overseas immigration. The forces driving continental migration had much more in common with those pushing the movement of Irish from central and eastern Canada than with the factors driving immigration from Ireland, and the term continental migration captures this distinction well. The term immigration will thus be reserved for discussion of those coming to the Prairie West directly from Ireland.

The Wheat Boom and the Irish in Western Canada

The prosperity of the wheat boom was the most important catalyst for the rapid expansion of settlement, Irish or otherwise, across western Canada in the early twentieth century. After years of slow and unsteady progress, the Prairie economy grew dramatically from the late 1890s to 1913, driven primarily by a sharp increase in western Canada's agricultural production. Improvements in farming technology and cultivation techniques, soaring demand for wheat in the United Kingdom and continental Europe, and a steady decline in overseas shipping costs converged to make Prairie farming more profitable. As hundreds of thousands of people flooded into the region, its population exploded from 419,512 in 1901 to 1,698,200 in 1916. The majority of new arrivals settled in rural areas, and the impact on Prairie agriculture was remarkable: between 1901 and 1913, the peak years of the wheat boom, the amount of land under cultivation rose fourfold from 2.5 million acres to 10 million acres, while the annual harvest output increased from 63 million to 209 million bushels.[1] Canada became a leading global exporter of grain, with the country's share of the international wheat market rising from four percent at the turn of the twentieth century to sixteen percent by 1914.[2]

Western Canadian settlement during the wheat boom was driven by unprecedented levels of both migration and immigration. Pushed out of central and eastern Canada by continued land shortage, migrants were drawn west by the booming Prairie economy, and by 1916, western Canada was home to 280,569 people born in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritime provinces.[3] The Prairie region also saw an influx of continental migrants, as the closing of the agricultural settlement frontier in the United States, coupled with a concerted effort by the Canadian government to attract American farmers, resulted in a sizeable movement north across the border. Western Canada was home to 197,855 American-born residents by 1916, the majority of whom (179,581) lived in Alberta and Saskatchewan.[4] Finally, the period was marked by a sustained and dramatic increase in immigration, beginning in the mid-1890s and continuing to the outbreak of the Great War. The United Kingdom remained the most important source of immigration to western Canada as agricultural depression and high unemployment drove tens of thousands to seek better opportunities across the Atlantic.[5]

The Irish were part of all three population movements, and the number of Irish resident in the Prairie region grew roughly threefold, from 66,215 in 1901 to 204,564 in 1916, with intergenerational Irish continuing to form the overwhelming majority of this population throughout the period (table 16). The 1916 census was the first to correlate data on ethnic origin with birthplace, allowing for an analysis of the relative importance of migration, continental migration and immigration on Irish settlement in the Prairie West (table 17). These data confirm that those born in Canada represented the largest cohort of the region's Irish population, comprising over three-quarters of the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Irish, and over sixty percent of the Irish resident in Alberta. American-born and immigrant Irish had settled in the region in comparable numbers, though the figures varied somewhat by province. Manitoba, which received few settlers from the United States generally in the early twentieth century, was home to only 2,840 American-born Irish, who comprised a mere 4.4 percent of the Irish in that province. Alberta and Saskatchewan, which received the bulk of continental migrants in the early 1900s, had much larger Irish American populations; for example, close to a quarter of the Irish in Alberta were born in the United States. While home to relatively few continental migrants, Manitoba had the largest Irish-born population, reflecting in part the continued importance of Winnipeg as a destination for Irish immigrants.

Three case studies will be examined to illustrate Irish settlement patterns in the rural West: the so-called Irish Colony of Saskatchewan, a unique example of Irish

Table 16 Irish population growth in western Canada, 1901-16

	1901*	1906**	1911	1916
Manitoba				
-Irish-born	4,537	6,137	8,743	10,127
-Intergenerational Irish	42,881	--	49,720	54,021
-Total Irish population	47,418	--	58,463	64,148
Saskatchewan				
-Irish-born	836	2,619	5,309	6,391
-Intergenerational Irish	7,256	--	48,556	75,957
-Total Irish population	8,092	--	53,865	82,348
Alberta				
-Irish-born	1,322	2,147	5,320	6,639
-Intergenerational Irish	9,383	--	31,419	51,429
-Total Irish population	10,705	--	36,739	58,068
All three provinces				
-Irish-born	6,695	10,903	19,372	23,157
-Intergenerational Irish	59,520	--	129,695	181,407
-Total Irish population	66,215	--	149,067	204,564

*Total for Saskatchewan in 1901 is for the Saskatchewan and Assiniboia East census districts; total for Alberta in 1901 is for the Alberta and Assiniboia West census districts.
** Data on intergenerational ethnic origin was not collected in the 1906 census.
Source: *Census of Canada*, 1901, vol. 1, Table 11, 286, 392-404; *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1906, Table 4, 86-87; *Census of Canada*, 1911, vol. 2, Table 10, 342-66, and Table 17, 440-43; and *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 6, 142-47 and Table 22, 216-17.

Table 17 Birthplace of Irish living in western Canada, 1916

Province	Canada	United States	Ireland	Other
Manitoba	50,300	2,840	10,127	881
Saskatchewan	62,551	12,629	6,391	777
Alberta	36,420	14,301	6,639	708
Regional Total	149,271	23,532	23,157	2,366

Source: *Census of Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 6, 142-47; Table 8, 150; Table 10, 152-57; and Table 12, 216.

Catholic colonization during the wheat boom; Macleod in southwestern Alberta, where continental migration resulted in a sizeable Irish American presence; and the Marquette district of southwestern Manitoba, where the children of late-nineteenth century settlers had emerged as the largest cohort of the Irish population. Collectively, these examples point to the relative importance of various migration and immigration streams in different parts of the Prairie West, and also yield insight into the individual experiences of Irish settlers.

The Irish Colony of Saskatchewan was established by Father John Chester Sinnett, an Ontario-born Irish Catholic clergyman who spent much of his early career working as a missionary in western Canada. Sinnett first moved to the Prairie region in 1891 and worked in St. Boniface, Portage la Prairie and Regina before enlisting as a chaplain in the Boer War, serving overseas with the Saskatchewan Regiment of the Canadian Mounted Rifles. He returned to Canada in 1902 and worked for a short time in Quebec before returning to the West to be vicar-general of the Prince Albert diocese.[6] Sinnett was impressed with the success of rural colonization in Saskatchewan by immigrant Catholic groups such as the Germans and Ukrainians, and he embraced the idea of founding a group settlement for English-speaking Catholics. The colony was founded in spring 1905 when eight settlers took up homesteads under Sinnett's direction on townships thirty-four and thirty-five, range twenty-one, west of the second meridian, approximately thirty miles south of St. Peter's Colony of German Catholics.[7] Dozens of other Roman Catholics joined the settlement over the next few months, and by the end of the year, fifty-five men (including some German Catholics from St. Peter's Colony) had claimed homesteads. Their number included Sinnett himself, who left his position in the Prince Albert diocese to serve as the priest for the Irish Colony's first parish, St. Ignatius, until 1922.[8]

Though officially registered as the hamlet of Sinnett in April 1906, the settlement came to be known informally throughout the district as the Irish Colony of

Saskatchewan. From the outset, however, the settlement was predominantly Irish, with a core group of Canadian-born intergenerational Irish Catholics joined by continental migrants from the United States and a small number of immigrants from Ireland. The original eight homesteaders were all of Irish descent. Five were recruited from Sheenboro, Quebec: John Tallon, an American-born Irishman who had moved to Canada from the United States in 1904; Quebec-born Thomas McGuire; Ontario-born Louis Hall; and two men, Simon Sullivan and James Devine, whose birthplaces cannot be determined from the available evidence. Two other colonists, Allan McEachern and Jack Laverty, were initially from Prince Edward Island. The eighth, Thomas Coughlin, immigrated from Country Tipperary to New York City in 1898, coming to Canada to homestead in the early twentieth century and working across western Canada as a farm labourer before arriving in Saskatchewan in 1904.[9] Laverty, Coughlin, McEachern and Sullivan were all bachelors and homesteaded on section twenty-eight of township thirty-four, while other colonists moved west with their wives and children. Hall migrated from Ontario with his wife Elizabeth and the couple's three sons, while McGuire moved west with his wife Ellen and five Quebec-born children; two sons would later be born to the couple after they settled in the Irish Colony. Other settlers who joined the colony by the end of 1905 included Ontario-born John Finner; Quebec-born John Downey; Irish American William Knaus, who moved north from North Dakota; and Thomas Brick, who immigrated to Canada from Ireland in 1905. Finner, Downey and Knaus all had wives and children residing with them in Sinnett by the time of the 1911 census; whether their families were present in the colony by the end of 1905 cannot be determined.[10]

The colony flourished, with over three hundred people living in the area by 1911. While Sinnett was home to a sizeable German minority, the Irish remained the single largest ethnic group in the area (table 18). The colony's Irish population was overwhelmingly intergenerational by 1911; only three of its 143 Irish residents were Irish immigrants, and at least one of those, Thomas Coughlin, had moved north from the United States. Of the other 140 people of Irish origin, 21 were Irish American and 119 were born in Canada: 65 in Ontario, 28 in Quebec, 22 in Saskatchewan, 3 in Prince Edward Island and 1 in Manitoba.[11]

Table 18 Ethnic origin of Sinnett's residents, 1911

Group	Township 34	Township 35	Total
Irish	64	79	143
German	38	26	64
Norwegian	0	39	39
English	27	5	32
French	13	1	14
Hungarian	14	0	14
Scottish	3	7	10
Russian	0	4	4
Total	159	161	320

Source: *Census of Canada*, 1911, Humboldt census district (209), enumeration district 38. Totals are for townships thirty-four and thirty-five, range twenty-one, west of the second meridian, and exclude totals for those townships in range twenty, which are included in enumeration district 38 but were not part of the Irish colony.

Sinnett was the only instance of Irish group settlement, immigrant or intergenerational, undertaken in rural western Canada during the wheat boom years. With the decline of the chaos that had plagued rural Ireland in the late nineteenth century, the British and Irish governments no longer explored the prospect of Irish immigrant colonization in rural western Canada. At the same time, the vast majority of intergenerational Irish settlers arrived in the Prairie West as individual homesteaders rather than as members of a colony or group settlement. The basis for the establishment of Sinnett was the settlers' common Roman Catholicism, but in this respect as well, Sinnett stood out as distinctive. Despite efforts by the Roman Catholic Church in Ontario to promote religious colonization in the Prairie West, Anglophone settlement in rural western Canada during the early twentieth century remained, as it had been in the first three decades after Confederation, largely Protestant.

The predominantly intergenerational and Protestant nature of the Irish presence in the early twentieth-century rural West is well illustrated by an examination of Irish settlement in the districts of Macleod and Marquette (tables 19 and 20). While Macleod had a larger proportion of Roman Catholics than Marquette did, Irish settlement in both census districts was overwhelmingly Protestant, comprising 79.7 percent of Macleod's and 95.4 percent of Marquette's Irish populations. Further, data on birthplace point to the relative importance of national and continental migration patterns on Irish settlement in western Canada. The most notable difference between the two sample areas is the size of their respective Irish American minorities – 29.5 percent of the Irish population in the case of Macleod, a mere 1.5 percent in the case of Marquette. The number of Irish Americans resident in Macleod clearly illustrates the importance of continental migration on settlement in Alberta, though the American born were not the only Irish crossing the border during the wheat boom. Among those moving north to Alberta during those years were both Irish who had immigrated to the United States and Canadian-born intergenerational Irish who had moved to the United States and were now returning to Canada.

Table 19 Religion of Irish settlers in Macleod and Marquette, 1911 (percent)

Religion	Macleod (n=945)	Marquette (n=1037)
Methodist	30.6	24.8
Presbyterian	25.7	41.5
Roman Catholic	20.3	5.6
Anglican	13.4	24.0
Baptist	3.4	1.9
Other	6.6	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Census of Canada, 1911, Macleod census district (3), enumeration districts 1 through 6 and 8 through 14 (enumeration district 7 illegible); and Marquette Census District, enumeration districts 1 through 22. 'Other' for the Macleod district consists of Mormon (18), Lutheran (15), Episcopalian (10), Christian (7), Saint (6), Brethren (4) and Congregationalist (2). Other for the Marquette district consists of Apostles (7), Protestant (5), Congregationalist (5), Episcopalian (4), Adventist (1) and Friends (1).

Table 20 Birthplace of Irish settlers in Macleod and Marquette, 1911 (percent)

Birthplace	Macleod District (n=957)	Marquette District (n=1042)
Ontario	33.0	34.4
United States	29.5	1.5
Prairie Provinces	19.0	44.2
Ireland	9.0	11.3
Quebec	2.3	6.6
Maritime Provinces	3.4	0.5
British Columbia	1.6	0.0
England/Scotland	1.7	1.2
Other	0.5	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Census of Canada, 1911, Macleod census district (3), enumeration districts 1 through 6 and 8 through 14 (enumeration district 7 illegible); and Marquette Census District, enumeration districts 1 through 22. 'Other' for the Macleod district consists of New Zealand (1), Bermuda (1), Newfoundland (1), Wales (1) and Canada (1). 'Other' for the Marquette district consists of Australia (2), Malta (1) and India (1).

In some cases, immigrant and intergenerational Irish migrated north across the border as part of the same family unit. One such example comes from the McCoy family, who settled near Milk River in the Macleod district. Thomas McCoy Sr. was born in County Roscommon in 1837 and immigrated with his family as a child to New Orleans during the Famine exodus to the United States. It was there that McCoy met Eliza Leehy, the Canadian-born daughter of parents from County Kerry who had immigrated to Lower Canada and subsequently moved with Eliza to New Orleans. Thomas and Eliza married in 1867 and raised a family of five children in Louisiana before moving north and settling in the predominantly Irish community of Newry, Minnesota. The high price of land drove the McCoy family further west, and in 1901, Thomas, Eliza and four of their children settled in North Dakota near the Manitoba border. The poor quality of the land, however, led McCoy's three sons – Thomas Jr., Anthony, and John – to seek better opportunities in western Canada, homesteading near Milk River in 1907. Their parents and sister Elizabeth followed the brothers one year later, settling permanently in Alberta and bringing to a close a remarkable family history of migration.[12] Thus, while the majority of Irish continental migrants to the Macleod district were undoubtedly American-born, the McCoy family illustrates how the cross-border population movement defied easy categorization. Driven west on two occasions as a result of limited economic prospects, the settlement of the McCoy family brought immigrant, Canadian- and American-born Irish together to Alberta during the wheat boom.

While continental migration was one of the critical defining features of settlement in Macleod, migrants from Ontario outnumbered their American-born counterparts, comprising approximately one-third of the area's overall Irish population. As was the case in the late nineteenth century, Ontario-born Irish were drawn by the lure of economic opportunity, with the arrival of some family members often setting in motion a process of chain migration that brought others to the region. For example, Samuel and George Travis, intergenerational Irish brothers from Port Elgin, Ontario, migrated to the Macleod area and claimed homesteads in 1902.

Samuel was a bachelor, while George moved to Macleod with his wife Sadie Impressed by the quality of the land, the brothers sent a "glowing report of the west" back to relatives in Ontario, capturing the attention of their sister Minnie and her husband Jack Jones. Minnie, Jack, and the couple's two young children joined Samuel and George the following year, while a third Travis brother, Charlie, moved to the district in 1905. The family migration was completed twenty years later when the siblings' presumably widowed mother came west to live with Charlie. In the case of the Jones and Travis families, kinship connections were central to the migration process, beginning with the arrival of the first two brothers in Alberta and their positive impressions of the region communicated to family members back home, drawing others to the district.[13]

In other instances, the migration of intergenerational Irish to Alberta was more interregional than national and represented the final stage in the movement westward that began with the migration of Irish out of Ontario to Manitoba in the 1870s. Such was the case with James C. Brown, who arrived with his family to homestead near the village of Granum. Born at Orono, Ontario, in 1852, Brown first ventured west as a young man, living for a time in Manitoba before pursuing new opportunities in California and British Columbia. He returned to the Prairies in 1885 and settled near Holland, Manitoba, marrying Lavina Shearer seven years later. The couple moved to southern Alberta with their Manitoba-born daughters, Alice, Phoebe and Laura, in 1905. Both James and Levina played leading roles in Granum's fledgling Methodist congregation, while James was also active in politics as an early member of the United Farmers of Alberta.[14]

The Ontario-born Irish were also well represented in the Marquette district, comprising approximately one-third of its Irish population. The district's most notable demographic feature, however, was the number of Irish born in western Canada – the 461 Prairie-born Irish in the Marquette sample area, 450 of whom were born in Manitoba, comprised 44.2 percent of the area's Irish population. The size of the Prairie-born cohort points to natural increase as the key factor behind Irish population growth in rural Manitoba during the early twentieth century, as the children of late nineteenth-century pioneers reached adulthood and raised families of their own. For example, James Falloon immigrated to Toronto from County Tyrone in 1875 and moved west to Winnipeg five years later where he married his fiancée Mary Scott, who had followed James to Winnipeg in 1880. Two years later, James and Mary, together with four Irish immigrant men, homesteaded in southwestern Manitoba near the village of Foxwarren. Here the Falloons raised a family of eight children, all of whom remained in the Marquette census in 1911. The household consisted of James and Mary, an adult son named Arthur, and five younger children, as well as an Irish immigrant servant, Sam Graham, who had arrived in Canada in 1910. Two other adult sons, Samuel and George, were also landowners in the district, living with their respective wives, Fannie and Norma. The 1911 census also records the presence of six-month-old Lois Falloon, daughter of George and Norma, and the first of James and Mary's twenty-seven grandchildren to be born in Manitoba.[15]

The extent to which these different settlement patterns manifested in different variants of Irish identity in the rural West during the wheat boom years is unclear. With Irish settlement predominantly defined by individual and family homesteading rather than by group colonization, the Prairie countryside was not fertile ground for collective expressions of Irishness, and there are no indications of Irish societies or associations being established outside of major urban centres. Whether Irish born in the United States, Ontario or the Prairie West identified as Irish, or as part of a larger British or Anglo-Canadian collective, remains largely invisible, and little in the historical record distinguishes them from other Anglophone settlers in rural western Canada.

Despite the dominance of the intergenerational cohort, immigrants also had a presence in the Macleod and Marquette districts, comprising 9.0 and 11.2 percent of their respective Irish populations. To some extent, this Irish-born presence reflected the legacy of earlier migration rather than new immigration to the Prairie West. Among the Irish immigrants resident in Macleod, for example, were the families of Edward and Harry Maunsell, along with other Irish-born ranchers who had settled the area in the late nineteenth century. Furthermore, the migration west of immigrant parents with their Canadian-born children, so prominent a feature of Irish settlement in the decades after Confederation, continued during the wheat boom. For example, the brothers William and John L. McNarland left Kent County, Ontario, in 1903 for homesteads on the Oldman River, near Granum in the Macleod district. William was joined later that year by his wife Ellen, as well as by the brothers' seventy-seven-year-old immigrant father John, who also claimed a homestead. John Sr. divided his time between residing on his own homestead and living with his sons; in the 1911 census he was recorded as living with William, Ellen and the couple's children John, Mary and Albert.

While the McNarland example hints at the continued importance of migration as a factor in Irish-born settlement, there are strong indications that this type of interprovincial migration played a less important role during the wheat boom than it had in the nineteenth century. Data from the 1916 census indicate that of the 20,379 Irish immigrants resident in the Prairie provinces, 16,042 had come to Canada after the turn of the twentieth century, with the overwhelming majority of them (13,200) having arrived in 1906 or later (table 21). Moreover, some of the 4,337 who had immigrated to Canada in the nineteenth century had undoubtedly come directly to the West, leaving relatively few Irish-born migrants from central and eastern Canada to arrive during the early twentieth century. These data strongly suggest that new immigration rather than migration was the most important factor driving Irish-born settlement in the early twentieth-century Prairie West.

Table 21 Year of immigration for western Canada's Irish-born, 1916

Province	Pre-1896	1896-1900	1901-1905	1906-1910	1911-1916
Manitoba	1,661	344	1,094	2,627	3,044
Saskatchewan	960	223	887	1,667	1,742
Alberta	859	290	861	2,095	2,025
Total	3,480	857	2,842	6,389	6,811

Source: *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 42, 279-81.

The influx of thousands of Irish immigrants was the product of both push and pull factors, as the draw of agricultural prosperity coincided with a dramatic increase in emigration from Ulster, the Irish province with the strongest historic links to Canada. While the number of emigrants leaving Leinster, Munster and Connacht declined from the 1890s through to the outbreak of the Great War, emigration from Ulster grew steadily, with 150,581 people leaving the province between 1900 and 1914.[16] Ulster's deviation from national trends reflected the effects of industrial growth and economic modernization in the province in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Northern Ireland's two largest cities, Belfast and Londonderry, grew into major shipping and manufacturing centres, linked to the towns and cities of the surrounding hinterland by the expansion of Ulster's railway system.[17] This modernization tied northern Ireland's economy more closely to Great Britain than to the rest of Ireland, shielding Ulster from the agricultural collapse that plagued much of Ireland in the 1880s. The same links, however, made Ulster vulnerable to fluctuations in the British economy, and while relative prosperity had returned to Leinster, Connacht and Munster by the early 1900s, much of northern Ireland experienced a serious economic downturn in response to the British recession of the early 1900s. The result was a sustained increase in emigration from Ulster, most notably from the heavily industrialized county of Antrim, one of the two leading source counties for emigration during the early twentieth century.

Given its historic emigration links with Ulster, and particularly Antrim, Canada was well positioned to capture an increased share of the new Irish emigration. After attracting a paltry 2.3 percent of all Irish emigrants in the 1890s, Canada drew an average of 11.1 percent of the annual outflow between 1901 and 1914; the peak was reached in 1913 when the 6,673 Irish who crossed the Atlantic to Canada represented 22.4 percent of that year's total emigration. Also, while chain migration links established during and after the Great Famine ensured that the United States would continue to attract the overwhelming majority (85.5%) of emigrants between 1901 and 1914, Canada emerged as the most important destination within the British Empire, attracting more Irish than all other British destinations combined by 1910. In the absence of assisted passages, emigration to Australia and New Zealand was an option available only to those with sufficient financial means, while the same economic downturn that was driving people out of Ulster made Great Britain unattractive. For those eschewing the United States for political and cultural reasons, such as "strong monarchist" Albert Kenny who immigrated to Wolseley, Manitoba, from County Galway in 1907, Canada was often the best option available.[18]

One of the defining features of early twentieth-century Irish emigration was the growing proportion of women in the outflow. Reduced wage-earning and marriage prospects after the Great Famine contributed to a sharp increase in female emigration in the late nineteenth century; women outnumbered men in the emigrant stream for the first time in the mid-1890s, forming a pattern that continued in the first two decades of the twentieth century, when women comprised 52.4 percent of all Irish emigrants.[19] This dominance, however, was not reflected in settlement patterns in western Canada, as men outnumbered women among the Irish-born populations of all three Prairie provinces by 1916 (table 22). In this regard, Irish immigrants were typical Prairie settlers: with direct access to homestead land restricted almost exclusively to men through the provisions of the 1872 Dominion Lands Act, men outnumbered women in the Prairie West throughout the years of the wheat boom, making up 55.1 percent of the overall population by 1916.[20]

Table 22 Sex of western Canada's Irish immigrant population, 1916

Province	Male	Female
Manitoba	5,521	4,606
Saskatchewan	4,015	2,376
Alberta	3,966	2,672
Regional Total	13,502	9,654

Source: *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 22, 216-17.

While a minority on the Prairies, women played a critical role in the success of homesteading and Irish immigrant women, as the letters of Anna McGalbraith effectively illustrate, were no exception. McGalbraith and her husband immigrated to Manitoba from Londonderry around 1912 and settled on a farm near the town of Ebor. Anna corresponded with family members back in Ireland from 1912 through 1914, and again from 1922 through 1926, by which time she and her husband had migrated further west to Sceptre, Saskatchewan. Anna's letters reveal that her economic role on the farm was typical of women in the early twentieth century rural West – for example, she contributed to the family income by raising poultry and selling butter and eggs at the local market. She wrote extensively on agricultural issues, describing in detail the prices available in Canada for various farm products and the high wages demanded by farm workers.[21] The McGalbraiths clearly faced some setbacks in Manitoba: Anna complained about early snowfalls, cold weather and hail "as large as hen eggs" that destroyed much of the family's crop in 1913.[22] The couple's fortunes recovered, however, and Anna was much more positive in a March 1914 letter to her mother in which she reported that the couple had used profits from the farm to purchase more livestock and poultry. The reason for the couple's later move to Saskatchewan is not clear because of the eight-year gap in Anna's correspondence. Her letters from Sceptre, however, indicate that her economic role had shifted – she reported that she was earning money by sewing dresses and shirts for sale at the market, and appears to have taken less of an active role in the day-to-day operations of the farm.[23] The fact that Anna could be spared from outdoor work to produce goods for sale suggests that the McGalbraiths were more prosperous by the 1920s than they had been in prewar Manitoba.

Beyond illustrating her contributions to the operation of the farm, McGalbraith's letters also point to her strong emotional ties to family in the Irish homeland. She demonstrated a keen interest in the deteriorating political situation in Ireland, as Unionist and Republican forces armed for possible conflict during the Home Rule crisis of 1914. In a March 1914 letter to her mother, McGalbraith asked about the security of her investments in the Derry Savings Bank, suggesting that the money be wired to a Canadian bank if violence broke out in Ulster. More significantly, McGalbraith was clearly worried about the safety of her family, writing that she was "very anxious about what may be the results if Home Rule passes," because the family would "all be rebels and may loose [sic] everything." The comment about the family being branded rebels indicates that they were Unionists, and Anna's concern over the prospect of civil war in Ulster led her to recommend Canada as a good destination for two male relatives, Johnny and James.[24] The position of Anna's family during the Great War and subsequent Anglo-Irish conflict is unknown. As McGalbraith's letters resume in the early 1920s, however, there are some hints of isolation, as well as possible tension with other family members. In October 1922, for example, Anna chastised her sister Lizzie for the latter's failure to send any letters with substantive news from home, although the two sisters continued to correspond.[25] Letters between Anna and her mother, however, cease after 1914. While this may reflect a lack of available evidence, a poignant question in a 1926 letter to Lizzie suggests otherwise, as Anna asked her sister "does [mother] ever talk of me, would she like to see me again?"[26] All record of the McGalbraith correspondence ceases after 1926, rendering a further investigation into Anna's familial relationships impossible. Collectively, however, her letters from 1912 onward provide a unique window into both the material and emotional dimensions of the Irish immigrant experience in early twentieth-century western Canada.

While it is unclear whether or not any members of Anna's family followed her recommendation to move to the Prairie West, her attention to climate, soil quality, agricultural prices, wages and other issues would have provided a wealth of information to those also contemplating emigration. As had been the case in the late nineteenth century, correspondence from friends and family already overseas remained the most trusted source of news about western Canada, often acting as a catalyst for further immigration. For example, Andrew Caldwell of Coleraine, County Londonderry, immigrated to Colleston in the North-West Territories in February 1900 after receiving news of the region from friends who settled there in the 1890s. Caldwell's presence then acted as a catalyst for further immigration, as he was joined in 1902 by his brother John and in 1914 by his cousin David J. Smith, who settled permanently in Saskatchewan after service in the Great War.[27] Similarly, James Loughran immigrated to Bredenbury, Saskatchewan, from Belfast in 1908 as a result of knowing Samuel Herron, who had settled in the district with his wife five years earlier. James would in turn be joined by his brother Harry in 1913.[28] In both cases, positive reports of western Canada provided by acquaintances already resident in the region proved crucial in the decision to immigrate.

Immigration promotion provided an additional source of information about western Canada to those contemplating emigration, as the Canadian government remained committed during the wheat boom years to constructing an attractive public image of the Prairie West in Ireland. Ottawa continued to operate two year-round immigration offices, one in Dublin and one in Belfast, with the latter replacing Londonderry as the centre of Canadian promotional activity in Ulster in 1902. Reflecting the much larger emigrant outflow from northern Ireland, the Belfast office was by far the busier of the two, receiving on average more than twice as many visitors per year than its Dublin counterpart.[29] Canadian agents increasingly took their recruitment efforts to the countryside, advertising Canada at agricultural shows and delivering lectures in rural villages. Public presentations delivered by agents were designed to impress the viewer with Canada's agricultural bounty; lectures were often illustrated with lantern slides, while Canadian booths at farm shows displayed carefully chosen examples of produce.[30] Other promotional efforts mirrored strategies first used in the 1870s and 1880s, as Ottawa advertised Canada through government literature and Irish newspapers, and by hiring farmer delegates to tour Ireland and lecture on their experiences as agricultural settlers in Canada, especially the West. For example, background information is available on seven of the thirteen delegates sent to tour Ireland in 1912 and 1913, the peak years of Irish immigration to Canada. All seven hailed from the Prairies: three from Alberta, two from Manitoba, and two from Saskatchewan.[31]

As in the nineteenth century, Canadian immigration agents continued to have a dual mandate with regard to recruiting farmers, instructed to attract both commercial operators with investment capital and the more common middling or peasant farmers who had some agricultural experience but were not themselves landowners. For example, in 1911 the Department of the Interior issued a booklet entitled *What Irishmen Say of Canada*, which provided a wealth of information on a wide range of topics about the Dominion. The focus, however, was primarily on agriculture and the opportunities presented by millions of acres of unsettled land in the West. To impress upon the Irish reader the sheer size of the country, the booklet pointed out that in 1910 alone, the amount of land given out as free homesteads on the Prairies was greater than the total combined size of Ulster and Munster.[32] The bulk of the booklet consisted of testimonials from fifty Irish immigrants, thirty-seven of them Prairie residents, about their agricultural experiences in Canada. Several stressed the independence that homesteading offered to the peasant farmer. F. Longmore of Blue Hill, Saskatchewan, emphasized that Canadian farmers paid reasonable taxes and never faced the threat of eviction by a landlord. He further stressed that even those with limited financial means would soon be "on the road to independence" through hard work and perseverance.[33] Other testimonials were aimed at farmers with investment capital, pointing to the availability of improved farms for those who had the financial means and wished to bypass the hardships of pioneer life.[34] In the words of John A. Davis, who had settled on a farm near Strathcona, Alberta, the Prairie West was suitable for "the farmer of small means, and a good place for the farmer who can buy an improved place."[35]

The vision of Canada, and particularly the Prairie West, as a land of opportunity did not go uncontested, as Canadian immigration agents faced strong resistance from a vigorous anti-emigration movement in Ireland. Reminiscent of earlier attacks on Manitoba as a 'barren and ice-bound land,' nationalists continued to portray western Canada as an arctic wilderness. For example, an editorial published in 1909 in the *Freeman's Journal*, one of the leading nationalist organs in Dublin, warned potential emigrants that the free homesteads of western Canada were located "in a dreary neighbourhood of nature's wildest freaks," and that Ottawa's hidden agenda was to recruit foreigners to act as "vermin killers" to clear the way for later settlers.[36] By April 1909, Superintendent of Canadian Emigration in Britain and Europe J. Obed Smith reported that nationalist newspapers in Ireland were taking "every opportunity" to denounce emigration in general, with specific condemnation of Canada focused on the harshness of the climate.[37] The organization that caused the most difficulty was the Anti-Emigration Society, established by Irish nationalists in Dublin in1903. The society obstructed Canadian and other countries' promotional efforts in Dublin and Ulster, pressured agricultural fairs and markets to boycott agents, and demanded the removal of immigration agents from Ireland, taking its appeal directly to Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier in 1904.[38]

Ottawa deemed the threat posed by this campaign serious enough to merit the dispatch of three special agents to Ireland between 1906 and 1913 to investigate anti-emigration propaganda and to gauge Irish public opinion of Canada. John Kennedy, who toured southern Ireland in 1906-07, reported that Roman Catholic shipping agents had been threatened with boycotts if they displayed promotional literature advertising Canada in their offices.[39] John J. McGee, a Gaelic-speaking resident of Ottawa, was sent in 1908 to further investigate conditions in southern Ireland.

McGee reported a more political source of anti-Canadian sentiment, suggesting that people in Wexford and other southern counties preferred immigration to the United States because they had no desire to continue living under the British flag.[40] Barclay McConkey, whose investigations took him throughout much of Ireland in 1913, reported that one shipping agent in the port city of Dundalk, County Louth, had been threatened by nationalists with boycotts if he advertised or otherwise promoted Canada in his office. McConkey also noted, however, that the general perception of Canada as a land hostile to Roman Catholics was in decline in Dundalk and the surrounding district, and that the aforementioned agent was now willing to book passengers to Canada.[41]

The overall impact of these contesting visions of Canada as either a land of opportunity or a desolate wilderness is impossible to identify or quantify. Prairie local history narratives, however, suggest that at least some Irish immigrants responded favourably to immigration promotion and the positive image of Canada, and particularly the Prairie West, as a land of prosperity. For example, Andrew Linton, who emigrated from County Antrim and settled with his wife near Tuxford, Saskatchewan, prior to the Great War, chose Canada after hearing public speakers praise the opportunities available for young immigrants and the chance to start a new life.[42] John Skeffington Palmer McCughan immigrated to western Canada from County Antrim in 1903 after learning about the availability of free 160-acre homesteads in the "promised land" of western Canada.[43] Perhaps most explicit was Mrs. C.J. Johnson, who moved from Ulster to Calgary in 1912 because she had heard that Canada offered tremendous opportunities to immigrants and that the "streets were paved with gold," reminiscent of comments made about the United States during the nineteenth-century Irish exodus to America.[44]

For many Irish settling in the rural west, the economic opportunities presented by the wheat boom extended to wage labour. For example, the rapid and ultimately reckless expansion of railway transportation in the region created a high demand for workers, as the amount of track laid tripled from 6,000 kilometres in 1901 to 18,000 in 1913.[45] The dramatic growth of agriculture also created a huge demand for seasonal labour, and between 1900 and 1914, an average of 18,745 men annually traveled to the Prairie West on harvest excursions.[46] The majority came from central and eastern Canada, though harvest excursions also offered newly-arrived immigrants the opportunity to travel to western Canada and learn first-hand about the conditions of Prairie farming. As Cecilia Dansyk notes, many used their period of waged agricultural labour as an apprenticeship to gain valuable experience with a view towards eventual independent farm ownership.[47]

The promotional work of the Dominion government in Ireland emphasized the high wages available for workers in western Canada,[48] and while existing historiography has generally ignored the Irish as an element of this workforce, correspondence and local history narratives point to the importance of wage labour in Irish settlement in the early twentieth-century Prairie West. For example, Samuel Parks immigrated to Canada from southern Ireland in 1905 and worked for farmers in the Transcona and Deloraine districts before homesteading near Douglas, Manitoba, three years later.[49] Three brothers from County Donegal – Dan, James and Jack McLaughlin – immigrated to Canada in 1903 and worked their way across the west as harvest labourers, eventually settling in Edmonton.[50] Railway work provided the means by which Samuel Graham, his wife Jane, and their ten children moved west to Alberta after the family immigrated to Winnipeg in 1908. Graham and his six sons worked on railway construction jobs west of Manitoba, eventually arriving in Stettler, Alberta, where the elder Graham took a job as a section foreman for the Canadian Northern Railway. Three of his sons, Tom, Bill, and Howard, continued to work building the rail line between Stettler and Munson, while the entire family took out homesteads near Hartshorn, Alberta, prior to the Great War.[51] Another Irish immigrant, Pat Colbert of Fermoy, County Cork, immigrated to Canada in 1908 and worked on railway survey crews in Alberta at Strathmore, Gleichen and Rosebud before settling near Rockyford.[52] The role played by the Irish in railway construction even entered western Canadian folk culture as a couplet sung as part of a children's game in early twentieth-century Stony Plain, Alberta: "Paddy from Ireland, Paddy from Cork/He went to build the railway."[53]

While Prairie settlement during the wheat boom was predominantly rural, the period was also marked by unprecedented growth in the region's urban population, which exploded from 106,000 in 1901 to 606,000 by 1916. Part of this growth occurred in the hundreds of new towns and villages established along the expanding railway lines, but more than half of this urban population (348,200) was concentrated in the major centres of Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Regina, all of which emerged as critical transportation, service and financial hubs.[54] By 1916, these five cities were home to 42,384 Irish, who represented 20.7 percent of the region's overall Irish population (table 23). Aggregate census data reveal that Irish immigrants were far more likely to settle in urban centres than their intergenerational counterparts. Overall, 39.5 percent of western Canada's Irish-born residents lived in its five largest cities, compared with only 18.3 percent of intergenerational Irish.

Table 23 Irish population of major western Canadian urban centres, 1916

City	Intergenerational	Immigrant	Total
Winnipeg	13,881	5,585	19,466
Edmonton	6,647	1,384	8,031
Calgary	6,345	1,273	7,618
Saskatoon	3,332	435	3,767
Regina	3,021	481	3,502
Total	33,226	9,158	42,384

Source: *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 7, 148-49, and Table 13, 218-19.

Irish immigrant women were drawn to the employment opportunities in western Canada's urban centres, most notably in the field of domestic service. Ireland's historical dominance as the leading source country for domestics had waned by the early twentieth century: while 90,028 servants immigrated to Canada from the United Kingdom in the decade prior to the Great War, only 8,983 came from Ireland.[55] Nonetheless, Irish women were among those recruited to fill the high demand for servants in the Prairie West. An example of this recruitment came from the work of Belfast shipping agent Sarah McArthur, who organized a scheme in conjunction with the Canadian government that brought dozens of Irish women to western Canada. McArthur arranged for their transportation to Winnipeg, where they were placed under the supervision of a Rev. John Blatherwick and directed to employers in Prairie towns; McArthur received a two-dollar commission from the Canadian government for each domestic successfully placed within a household.[56] The scheme was short-lived on account of McArthur's decision to move to Toronto, at which time her work directing servants to western Canada ceased. During the two years the scheme was in operation (1911-12), she sent 190 domestics to western Canada, most of whom were placed in Manitoba (127) and Saskatchewan (48).[57]

The perspective of the servants themselves remains elusive, though a letter sent to McArthur in late 1911 yields insight into the adjustment one domestic made to life in western Canada. Twenty-one-year-old Jennie MacKay, sent from Belfast to work in Cameron, Manitoba, wrote of her amazement at the "vastness of the Prairie" and hinted at feelings of isolation, noting that she was the subject of some curiosity in a district with virtually no other Irish immigrant women. She also reported that her "initiation into a Canadian household" was difficult and that she had proven unprepared for the responsibilities of a domestic, clearly betraying a lack of previous experience. Still, MacKay characterized her decision to move to Canada as a positive one and described the three previous years she had spent working in a Belfast factory as time wasted.[58] While MacKay praised the patience of her employer in helping her making the adjustment to life in Canada, other employers were apparently less sympathetic. Mrs. James Wilkinson wrote to the Canadian government in April 1912 to complain about Mary O'Neill, a young woman placed in her home by Rev. Blatherwick. Wilkinson was dissatisfied with O'Neill's performance and claimed that the servant's only job experience prior to arriving in Canada was in a factory. The woman also speculated that O'Neill was a runaway, described her as "one of the worst type of girls" she had ever seen, and said she had fired her after only one month of employment.[59]

Domestic service thus remained, as it had been in late nineteenth-century Winnipeg, the most important job opportunity available to Irish women in western

Canada during the wheat boom. The experience of an Irish immigrant identified in archival records only as John echoes another feature of the earlier Irish urban experience – temporary residence as a stage in the process of eventual agricultural settlement. In a letter written to a friend back in Belfast in 1903, John reported that he had taken a homestead near Saskatoon, and was working in the city as a general labourer for a fellow Irish immigrant. John was clearly impressed with Saskatoon's potential for growth and made note in his letter of the city's rising real estate values and expanding railway links. At the same time, his primary focus remained fixed on homesteading: he speculated that he would try growing flaxseed and expressed his conviction that he would certainly "succeed better than [he] ever could have hoped at home."[60]

For other Irish, including members of the business and professional classes, urban life was a permanent rather than temporary phase of Prairie settlement. In his letter, the aforementioned John identified his employer as an immigrant from County Galway named Acheson who was one of Saskatoon's leading lawyers. Though there is insufficient evidence to identify this lawyer with absolute certainty, he was likely Herbert Acheson, who would serve as president of the Irish Association of Saskatoon in the early 1900s. While the fact that Acheson employed an Irish immigrant to work for him may have been a coincidence, the lawyer's subsequent leadership of the Irish Association of Saskatoon, which offered assistance to Irish men seeking employment, suggests that he may have consciously sought to hire an Irish immigrant. The growth of Irish settlement in western Canada's urban centres, both immigrant and intergenerational, would create demand for employment assistance and benevolent services, acting as an important catalyst for the growth of Irish associational activity across the region in the early twentieth century.

The end of the wheat boom in 1913 and outbreak of the Great War one year later brought to an end the most dynamic period of Irish settlement in Prairie history. It was a period that saw the extension of many old patterns into the twentieth century, as Irish settlement continued to be dominated by the intergenerational ethnic group and remained predominantly rural, though the Irish also established a strong presence in the region's emerging urban centres. The pace of settlement, Irish or otherwise, in the Prairie region slowed considerably during the war years; after this four-year lull, however, the postwar years ushered in a new stage in the history of Irish settlement in western Canada.

Postwar Irish Settlement in the Prairie West

The Prairie economy slumped in the immediate postwar years, primarily due to a dramatic fall in the price of wheat. Many farmers had responded to soaring demand and the imperatives of war production by expanding their farming operations between 1914 and 1918, focusing on wheat cultivation at the expense of other crops. This expansion, however, left many farmers deeply in debt and vulnerable to fluctuations in the international grain market. Protectionist economic policies in the United States, coupled with sharply declining wheat prices, hit the Prairie economy hard in the early 1920s, with the number of farms falling from 256,000 in 1921 to 248,000 five years later.[61] Prairie agriculture recovered somewhat in the second half of the 1920s, though it never approached the unprecedented prosperity of the wheat boom era.

Economic uncertainty rendered the Prairie West a less attractive destination for immigrants and migrants than it had been in the early 1900s, and the previous spectacular expansion of settlement gave way to more uneven growth. The overall population of the Prairie region rose from 1,698,220 in 1916 to 2,353,529 in 1931, while the number of Irish in the region went from 204,564 to 261,633 (table 24). It is impossible to examine Irish settlement in the region in the same detail for earlier periods, given current restrictions on access to all federal and provincial censuses conducted after 1911. Aggregate census data, however, reveal that the Irish continued to be dominated by the intergenerational cohort, with immigrants comprising only 10.9 percent of the regional Irish population by 1931. Most probably, intergenerational growth in the postwar years was due primarily to natural increase rather than to renewed national or continental migration. For example, there was a steady decline in the number of Prairie residents born in central and eastern Canada in this period, falling from 280,569 in 1916 to 241,532 by 1931.[62] These data are not correlated with ethnic origin, precluding a precise calculation of the impact of this decline on the intergenerational Irish population. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to suggest that the trend noted earlier in this chapter in the Marquette census district, which saw the growing dominance of the Prairie-born Irish in Manitoba by 1911, was replicated in the 1920s across the region.

A clearer picture is available, however, of Irish immigration to the Prairie West in the 1920s. High unemployment, exacerbated by the return to Ireland of an estimated two hundred thousand munitions workers and demobilized soldiers, acted

Table 24 Population growth in western Canada, 1916-31

Province	1916	1921	1926	1931
Manitoba				
-Irish-born	10,127	10,776	10,303	10,765
-Intergenerational Irish	54,021	60,638	61,555	66,794
-Total Irish population	64,148	71,414	71,858	77,559
-Total provincial population	553,860	610,118	639,056	700,139
Saskatchewan				
-Irish-born	6,391	6,897	7,700	8,159
-Intergenerational Irish	75,957	77,889	85,961	95,937
-Total Irish population	82,348	84,786	93,661	104,096
-Total provincial population	647,835	757,510	820,738	921,785
Alberta				
-Irish-born	6,639	7,374	8,302	9,634
-Intergenerational Irish	51,429	60,872	59,790	70,344
-Total Irish population	58,068	68,246	68,092	79,978
-Total provincial population	496,525	588,454	607,599	731,605
All Three Provinces				
-Irish-born	23,157	25,047	26,305	28,558
-Intergenerational Irish	181,407	199,399	207,306	233,075
-Total Irish population	204,564	224,446	233,611	261,633
-Total regional population	1,698,220	1,956,082	2,067,393	2,353,529

Source: Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1916, Table 6, 142-47, and Table 22, 216-17; *Census of Canada*, 1921, vol. 1, Table 24, 357; and Bulletin 16, Table 3, 14-15, *Census of Manitoba*, 1926, Table 1, 9, and Table 33, 82; *Census of Saskatchewan*, 1926, Table 1, 216, and Table 33, 346; *Census of Alberta*, 1926, Table 1, 518, and Table 33, 626; *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 1, 3, Table 31, 294-95, and Table 45, 710-713.

as a major push factor for the resumption of emigration.[63] An estimated three hundred thousand crossed the Atlantic to North America between 1921 and 1930, while an additional twenty-five thousand emigrated to Australia and New Zealand.[64] Economic uncertainty remained the central driving force behind this renewed wave of emigration. Hampered by the challenges of nation-building and reconstruction after the physical devastation of the Anglo-Irish War (1919-21) and the Irish Civil War (1922-23), Ireland's economy remained sluggish throughout the 1920s.

The correspondence and narratives of Irish immigrants who settled in western Canada point strongly to the material basis of emigration in that decade. Some individuals, such as James Gilligan of Lisneskea, County Fermanagh, cited high unemployment as the critical factor causing them to leave Ireland. A Great War veteran, Gilligan remained in the British army until 1926, after which time he returned to Ireland. Unable to find work, he came to Canada the next year and settled on a farm in Alberta.[65] Other immigrants referred to Canada in glowing terms as the "land of milk and honey" where young, ambitious men and women could "establish their independence and make their fortune."[66] In some cases, individuals pointed to sectarian violence as the key factor in pushing them to emigrate from Ireland. John Sweetman of Skibbereen, County Cork, moved with his wife and three children to Alberta after his brother Matthew was killed by the Irish Republican Army in 1921.[67] Most often, however, immigrants simply referred in general terms to hard or difficult times in Ireland and the lack of future prospects. Typical in this regard was Alexander McCullough, who emigrated with his wife from County Down to Viking, Alberta, in 1924, and later recalled that he "decided to come to Canada because there were such hard times in Ireland and we heard things were good here."[68]

Canada became an increasingly significant destination for Irish emigrants in the 1920s. The 66,787 Irish who arrived during the 1920s represented 20.3% of the overall outflow from Ireland and the largest share of immigrants that Canada had attracted for any decade since the 1860s.[69] This increase was facilitated in part by developments in the United States, which saw a steady decline in Irish immigration during the 1920s.[70] Falling demand for Irish workers in the 1920s, especially domestic servants, contributed to this decline, as did restrictive legislation limiting the number of immigrants entering the United States. The 1924 US Immigration Act established an annual quota of 28,567 immigrants from the Irish Free State, a number which was reduced to 17,853 in 1929.[71] As historian Kent Fedorowich argues, the quotas set by the American government in the 1920s symbolized rising anti-emigration sentiment in the country, which in turn acted as a deterrent for potential Irish emigrants.[72]

Far from setting restrictive quotas, Canada undertook once again to attract Irish immigrants through an aggressive promotional campaign across Ireland, though such work did not commence on a wide scale until the end of the Irish Civil War in 1923. The violent chaos in postwar Ireland, coupled with the strong opposition of Irish nationalists to emigration, made the work of immigration agents extremely dangerous, and the Canadian government scaled back its activities in Ireland in the immediate postwar years.[73] Anxiety over the postwar resumption of emigration led that country's parliament, the Dáil Éireann, to pass a decree in August 1920 prohibiting any citizen from leaving the country without the expressed consent of the Republican government.[74] The decree proved ineffective and was lifted in 1923, but many nationalists continued to view emigration as a threat to the strength of the emergent state and were openly hostile to promotional work by foreign governments.[75] Despite this lingering hostility, the Canadian government resumed its emigration promotion in the Irish Free State in late 1923.

As had been the case prior to the war, however, most of Ottawa's promotional work continued to focus on Northern Ireland, where Canada's traditional emigration links yielded impressive results. While exact statistics on emigration from Northern Ireland are unavailable, a clear majority of emigrants leaving Northern Ireland chose

Canada over the United States or other destinations in the British Empire.[76] The demand was such that in September 1926, the Canadian government increased the number of immigration agents working in Belfast from one to three, more than had been stationed in the city during the prewar immigration boom.[77] Canadian government representatives were joined in Northern Ireland by agents of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which sought to attract immigrants to settle on vacant railway lands in the Prairie West. Lectures by both government and corporate agents emphasized the economic opportunities available in Canada, focusing on the quality and abundance of land and the job prospects available through which emigrants could earn sufficient capital to establish themselves on farms. Reflecting the durability of popularly-held misconceptions about Canada as a wilderness, speakers at public lectures assured the audiences that Canada was no longer a land of "buffaloes, Red Indians and cowboys" but rather one of "abounding prosperity," and that western Canada was well past the pioneer stage of development."[78]

Economic uncertainty remained the central push factor, but political volatility in postwar Ireland also stimulated emigration. Sectarian violence, intimidation and deeply-entrenched political and economic discrimination resulted in the departure of both Catholics from Northern Ireland and Protestants from the Irish Free State. Demographic information in this period is incomplete because no census was taken in Ireland in 1921, denying historians a foundation of data from which to evaluate later population movements. Donald Harman Akenson has attempted to reconstruct a partial picture of the mass movement of Protestants out of the Irish Free State in the early 1920s using data from the 1911 and 1926 censuses. In that fifteen-year period, the number of Protestants in the twenty-six counties of the Irish Free State fell by 32.4 percent.[79] Drawing on Akenson's method, a calculation of the number of Catholics living in the six counties that became Northern Ireland reveals a less dramatic decline, from 368,587 in 1911 to 354,747 in 1926.[80]

Especially at risk in the Irish Free State in the 1920s were those individuals – including administrators, discharged soldiers, and policemen – who had served as agents of British power in Ireland. Of central concern to the British government was the future of the Royal Irish Constabulary, which had functioned as the primary police force in Ireland since 1836 and suffered terrible casualties during the Anglo-Irish War – 405 policemen killed and 682 wounded by the Irish Republican Army.[81] The establishment of the Irish Free State meant the disbandment of the constabulary and the British government, anticipating retribution that former policemen would face at the hands of nationalists, began exploring options for the emigration of ex-members to the dominions. The Colonial Office first approached the Canadian government in early 1922 about whether positions might be available for the men in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Though unwilling to accept new applicants, Ottawa agreed to extend to former members of the constabulary the provisions of the Soldier Settlement Act, which provided financial assistance to Great War veterans to help them establish farms in Canada. Through their participation in this program, 582 former members of the Royal Irish Constabulary immigrated to Canada in the 1920s, more than to any other country.[82] The final regional distribution of these immigrants within Canada is unknown, though the records of the Department of Immigration and Colonization permit a partial reconstruction. Of the sixty-three requests for pension commutation received by department secretary Frank C. Blair, twenty-six were from former constabulary members living in western Canada – fifteen in Manitoba, eight in Alberta and three in Saskatchewan.[83]

For some former members of the constabulary, the soldier settlement scheme was clearly a success. J. McMullan of County Antrim used the program, along with his wife and four children, to reunite with a daughter who had already immigrated to Edmonton to work as a domestic servant.[84] In contrast, John Albert Dean, who settled in Winnipeg, was disillusioned with his new life in Canada. As was the case with many British immigrants in the early 1920s, the promise of western Canada as a land of "boundless opportunity" did not materialize for Dean.[85] In a 1923 letter to Frank C. Blair, he complained about being unable to find work and expressed his desire to return to Ireland:

> I want to go back to the Old Country where I can find my own work… Once I get across there I will be on my feet again. My people is [sic] there. I have no friends out here and I don't know what I am going to do.

In a remarkably condescending response, Blair suggested to Dean that he simply needed to show more perseverance and "not depend entirely on other people to help [him] along."[86] Blair's reply also hints at the somewhat ambivalent attitude many Canadians had regarding imperial settlement in the 1920s. While British immigration was viewed with favour as a means of bolstering Canada's Anglo-Saxon population, concerns were also raised by some about the suitability of British immigrants for the rigours of Canadian settlement.[87] Blair's assessment of Dean's character suggests a similar concern about the constabulary immigrants. Whether Dean remained in Canada or not is unclear, but his correspondence hints at the difficulty some participants in the scheme had adjusting to life in western Canada, particularly in the uncertain economic climate of the early 1920s.

In addition to soldier settlement, Irish families also settled in postwar western Canada as part of emigration schemes negotiated between Canada and the United Kingdom under the Empire Settlement Act. Passed in 1922, the act authorized the British government to spend up to three million pounds per year for assisted immigration to the dominions. The legislation served both the interests of metropole and colony – in addition to strengthening the bonds of Empire through settlement, assisted migration offered a safety valve for a British government eager to alleviate postwar social tensions created by high unemployment, while offering the dominions the opportunity to increase their British populations.[88] The most important agreement reached under the act was the 3,000 Families Scheme of 1924. By the terms of this agreement, the British government agreed to provide assisted passages to Canada for three thousand families, while the Canadian government would provide the immigrants with a constructed house and $1,500 loans for the purpose of acquiring livestock and agricultural tools. The logistics of setting the families up on the land was assigned to the Soldier Settlement Board.[89] The program exceeded its original mandate, assisting 3,349 families to immigrate in Canada between 1924 and 1929; almost two-thirds (2,165 families) of which settled in the Prairie West.[90]

In terms of western Canadian Irish settlement, the most important outcome of the Three Thousand Families Scheme was the establishment of the Irish Catholic colony of St. Brides, Alberta, in 1927. Plans for the colony were set in motion in 1925 when the Soldier Settlement Board purchased 18,720 acres from the Saddle

Lake Reserve, roughly half of which was set aside for the establishment of the St. Brides Colony.[91] Its name, chosen to honour St. Bridget, reflected the overwhelmingly Irish nature of the settlement: of the fifty-four original colonists, forty were born in Ireland, predominantly in Counties Tyrone and Antrim.[92] The majority of the settlers came from rural and/or working-class backgrounds, with farmer (thirteen) and labourer (nine) listed as the most common occupations.[93] In much the same way as Irish immigrants during the wheat boom, the St. Brides colonists often secured work as railway and harvest labourers to supplement their incomes in the early stages of rural settlement.

The immigrants who joined the St. Brides Colony appear to have been motivated by the typical forces driving Irish immigration to Canada in the 1920s. For example, Francis Maguire of County Fermanagh came to St. Brides because he did not want to live or raise his children in a divided Ireland.[94] Other immigrants pointed specifically to high unemployment in Ireland as a critical factor, but most conflated political and economic issues into general statements about troubled times in Northern Ireland. Figuring among the original colonists, Joseph and Rose Kilpatrick of Balleymoney, County Antrim, opted for beginning anew in western Canada because they "realized that there was little future in Ireland for their family."[95] James and Hannah McGill of County Londonderry joined the settlement because of "troubled times" in Ireland and the opportunity "to begin a new life for their family."[96] And while some colonists later recalled being hesitant about immigrating to St. Brides on account of perceptions that Canada "was a wilderness inhabited by ferocious wild animals and half-naked, blood-thirsty savages," at least one couple was convinced to join the venture as a direct result of positive impressions of western Canada. John and Ellen McGrath immigrated to St. Brides in 1927 because they were impressed by "advertising billboards showing wheatfields golden in the sun, promising a better living for loved ones."[97]

Overall, Irish immigration to western Canada in the 1920s was marked by both continuities and discontinuities with earlier periods. In much the same way as it had since the 1870s, the Canadian government advertised western Canada as a promising field for Irish immigration and agricultural settlement, though these promotional efforts had to overcome lingering Irish perceptions of the Prairie West as a dangerous wilderness. While limited economic prospects remained the most important motive force pushing men and women to leave Ireland, rising sectarian violence and the partition of Ireland added a new political dimension to postwar immigration. Schemes such as the Empire Settlement Act opened up new avenues for Irish immigration to the Prairie West and led to the establishment of the St. Brides Colony, though the majority of Irish in this period certainly continued to arrive through the more traditional route of individual or family immigration.

Conclusion

The first three decades of the twentieth century saw the growth and consolidation of the Irish presence in the Prairie West. The expansion of Irish settlement was most dramatic during the prewar years as the prosperity of the wheat boom drew Irish men and women to the region in unprecedented numbers. As had been the case in the late nineteenth century, western Canada's Irish population continued to be dominated by the intergenerational cohort, though continental migration introduced a new dynamic into settlement patterns and resulted in a sizeable Irish American population in Alberta and Saskatchewan. At the same time, Irish immigration reached new heights during the wheat boom, as a faltering economy drove many young men and women to leave Ireland in search of better opportunity in the Prairie West. This period of rapid Irish settlement closed with the end of the wheat boom and the outbreak of the Great War, and was replaced by a phase of steady, if less spectacular, population growth in the postwar years. Thousands of new Irish immigrants, pushed out of Ireland by economic dislocation and political unrest, joining a regional Irish population that remained predominantly intergenerational but was increasingly Prairie-born rather than migrant by the 1920s.

While Irish settlement throughout this period remained largely rural, the growing Irish presence in the region's urban centres during the wheat boom ultimately set the stage for an expansion of Irish associational activity across the Prairie West. The identity articulated by these societies reflected in part the nature and timing of early twentieth century western Canadian settlement. Many associations, infused with the optimism that had drawn the Irish to the Prairie West, celebrated western Canadian prosperity and Irish contributions to the region's social, political and economic development. Other societies, while always representing a minority of the western Canadian Irish, expressed a more nationalist vision, as immigrants who had left the highly charged political atmosphere of prewar Ireland arrived in the Prairie West and took a leading role in associations devoted to the achievement of Irish Home Rule. These dual visions of Irishness would define the parameters of Irish associational culture in the Prairie West in the years leading up to the Great War.

Notes

[1] John Herd Thompson, *Forging the Prairie West* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 77.
[2] Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1996), 234-35.
[3] The provincial breakdown of this total is as follows: 245,502 born in Ontario and 38,244 born in Quebec. See the historical comparison tables in *Census of Manitoba*, 1926, Table 14, 39; *Census of Saskatchewan*, 1926, Table 14, 288; and *Census of Alberta*, 1926, Table 14, 574.
[4] *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 25, 221-22.
[5] Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 113-14; *Census of Canada*, 1901, vol. 1, Table 14, 446-47.
[6] Jack Coughlin, *The Irish Colony of Saskatchewan* (Scarborough: Lochleven Publishers, 1995), 19-22
[7] Coughlin, *The Irish Colony of Saskatchewan*, 49.
[8] Coughlin, *The Irish Colony of Saskatchewan*, 24.
[9] Information on the first eight homesteaders taken from Coughlin, *The Irish Colony of Saskatchewan*, 7-8, and cross-referenced with *Census of Canada*, 1911, Humboldt census district (209), sub-district 38. Coughlin lists Devine and Simpson as being of Irish descent, but gives no information on their birthplace.
[10] *Census of Canada*, 1911, Humboldt census district (209), enumeration district 38.
[11] *Census of Canada*, 1911, Humboldt census district (209), enumeration district 38.
[12] Masinasin Historical Society, *From Sandstone to Settlers: Writing on Stone District History, 1900-1983* (Milk River, AB: Masinasin Historical Society, 1983), 486-88.
[13] Granum History Committee, *Leavings by Trail, Granum by Rail* (Granum, AB: Granum History Committee, 1977), 328-29.
[14] Granum History Committee, *Leavings by Trail, Granum by Rail*, 194-95.
[15] Marion W. Abra, *A View of the Birdtail: A History of the Municipality of Birtle, the Town of Birtle and the Villages of Foxwarren and Solsgirth, 1878-1974* (Birtle, MB: The History Committee of the Municipality of Birtle, 1974), 285-87.
[16] W.E. Vaughn and A.J. Fitzpatrick, eds. *Irish Historical Statistics: Population, 1821-1971* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1978), 345-53.
[17] Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 370.
[18] Wolseley and District History Book Committee, *Bridging the Past: Wolseley and District, 1880-1980* (Wolseley, SK: Wolseley and District History Book Committee, 1981), 303.
[19] Pauline Jackson, "Women in Nineteenth Century Irish Emigration," *International Migration Review* 18, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 1007.
[20] *Census of the Prairie Provinces*, 1916, Table 22, 216-17. The overall numbers for 1916 are 935,652 men to 762,568 women living in the Prairie region.

[21] Annie to Lizzie, 6 November 1912 and 3 November 1913, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/26 and T 2722/27, Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (hereafter PRONI), Belfast. For the economic role played by women in the rural West, see Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 307-8.

[22] Annie to Lizzie, 14 July 1913, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/28, PRONI, Belfast.

[23] Annie to Lizzie, 24 January 1923, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/31, PRONI, Belfast.

[24] Annie to her mother, 9 March 1914, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/29, PRONI, Belfast.

[25] Annie to Lizzie, 25 October 1922, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/30, PRONI, Belfast.

[26] Annie to Lizzie, 31 March 1923, Sample Family Emigrant Papers, T 2722/31, PRONI, Belfast.

[27] Meskanaw Celebrate Saskatchewan Historical Committee, *Meskanaw: Its Story and Its People* (Melfort: Phillips Publishers Ltd., 1980), 53-56, 202.

[28] Bredenbury History Book Committee, *Memory Lane: A Local History of Bredenbury and Districts* (Bredenbury, SK: Bredenbury History Book Committee, 1978), 36-37, 117.

[29] Canada, Department of the Interior, *Annual Reports*, 1909-1915. Both offices began including the total number of visitors received as part of their annual reports as of 1908. The total visitors for the years 1908-1914 were 6,596 to the Belfast office and 2,467 to the Dublin office.

[30] Marjory Harper, "Enticing the Emigrants: Canadian Agents in Ireland and Scotland, c. 1870 – c. 1920," *Scottish Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (April 2004): 43-44. See also Dublin Agent Edward O'Kelly to Lord Strathcona, 10 August 1899, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 80, file 6968, part 1, Library and Archives of Canada (hereafter LAC), Ottawa.

[31] Canada, "Report of Edward O'Kelly," *Department of the Interior Annual Report*, 1911-12, p. 82; "Report of Edward O'Kelly," *Department of the Interior Annual Report*, 1912-13, p. 98.

[32] *What Irishmen Say of Canada* (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1911), 13.

[33] *What Irishmen Say of Canada*, 34. See also the testimonials of James J. Wolfe, 18; and Edward Flynn, 27.

[34] *What Irishmen Say of Canada*, 21

[35] *What Irishmen Say of Canada*, 28.

[36] *Freeman's Journal*, [n.d.], reprinted in the *Ottawa Citizen*, 8 October 1909, included in Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol.110, file 21988, LAC, Ottawa.

[37] Quote from J. Obed Smith included in a memorandum from Minister of the Interior Frank Oliver to Superintendent of Immigration W.D. Scott, 6 April 1909, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 110, file 21988, LAC, Ottawa.

[38] For the establishment of the Anti-Emigration Society, see Philip O'Leary, *The Prose Literature of the Gaelic Revival, 1881-1921: Ideology and Innovation*

(University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1994), 142. For correspondence between the society and the Canadian government, see Margaret O'Reilly, Secretary of the Anti-Emigration Society, to Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier, 28 March 1904, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 110, file 21988, LAC, Ottawa. For examples of interference by anti-emigration agitators with Canadian promotional work, see Canada, "Report of John Webster," *Department of the Interior Annual Report*, 1903-04, pp. 23-4; 1904-05, p. 60; 1905-06, p. 68; 1906-07, p. 68; and Canada, "Report of Edward O'Kelly," *Department of the Interior Annual Report*, 1903-04, p. 25.

[39] John Kennedy to William Duncan Scott, 20 May 1907, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 405, file 591341, LAC, Ottawa.

[40] John J. McGee to W.W. Cory, Deputy Minister of the Interior, 7 December 1907, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, 1-A-1, vol. 486, file 752060, LAC, Ottawa.

[41] Report on Emigration to Canada from Ireland by Special Commissioner Barclay McConkey, September 1913, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 542, file 804295, LAC, Ottawa.

[42] Tuxford Heritage Committee, *Heritage of the Wheatlands* (Tuxford, SK: Tuxford Heritage Committee, 1979), 280.

[43] Govan and District Local History Association, *Last Mountain Echoes: A Family and School History of Govan and District* (Govan, SK: Govan and District Local History Association, 1980), 503-04

[44] Jessie J. Campbell, ed., *Chatter Chips From Beaver Dam Creek: Castor and Her Neighbours, 1909-1974* (Castor, AB: Castor Old Timers' Association, 1974), 242. For the 'golden streets' motif in the United States, see Kerby Miller and Bruce Boling, "Golden Streets, Bitter Tears: The Irish Image of America During the Era of Mass Migration," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 10, nos. 1-2 (Fall/Winter 1990-91): 16-35.

[45] Norrie and Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 237.

[46] John Herd Thompson, "Bringing in the Sheaves: The Harvest Excursionists, 1890-1929," *Canadian Historical Review* 59, no. 4 (December 1978): 468.

[47] Cecilia Dansyk, *Hired Hands: Labour and the Development of Prairie Agriculture, 1880-1930* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), 60-63.

[48] For example, see the testimonials printed in *What Irishmen Say About Canada* by James Wolfe (18), George Roe (19), Sam Nevin and Archie Campbell (20), R. Smith (24) and F. Lonmore (34). See also *Newtownards Chronicle*, 21 March 1903 for coverage of a lecture given by farmers' delegate John Kennedy in Newtownards, County Down in which Kennedy stresses the high wages to be earned working in the Prairie West.

[49] Douglas History Book Club, *Echoes of a Century* (Douglas, MB: Douglas History Book Club, 1982), 262.

[50] Mannville and District Old Timers' Society, *Trails to Mannville: A History of Mannville and District* (Mannville, AB: The Society, 1983), 613-14.

[51] Marie J. Campbell, ed., *Still God's Country: The Early History of Byemoor and Area* (Byemoor, AB: Byemoor History Committee,1975), 121.

[52] Rockyford and District History Book Society, *Where We Crossed the Creek and Settled: Rockyford* (Rockyford, AB: Rockyford and District History Book Society, 1980), 187-88. For other examples, see Isabel M. Campbell, *Pioneers of the Peace* (Grande Prairie, AB: Grande Prairie and District Old Timers' Association, 1975), 140; and Minnehaha Co-op Women's Auxiliary, *Tales and Trails of the Following School Districts: Blackfoot, Daysville, Lake Russell, Minnehaha, Parkdale, Picnic Lake, 1893-1979* (North Battleford, SK: Turner-Warwick,1979), 74.

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[54] Thompson, *Forging the Prairie West*, 86.

[55] Marilyn Barber, *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 2.

[56] John Webster to William Duncan Scott, 29 September 1910; and William Duncan Scott to Rev. John Blatherwick, 8 November 1911, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 551, file 806038, part 1, LAC, Ottawa.

[57] *Domestic Servants Sent Out from Ireland by Mrs. M.L.S. McArthur, Belfast, c/o Rev. J. Blatherwick, Winnipeg, Season 1911* and *Season 1912*, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 551, file 806038, part 1, LAC, Ottawa.

[58] Jennie MacKay to Sarah McArthur, 30 January 1911, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 551, file 806038, part 1, LAC, Ottawa.

[59] William Duncan Scott to Rev. John Blatherwick, 4 April 1912, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, vol. 551, file 806038, part 1, LAC, Ottawa.

[60] John [last name illegible] to Alex, 30 October 1903, Taylor Emigrant Fonds, T 2296/7, PRONI, Belfast.

[61] Thompson, *Forging the Prairie West*, 113-14.

[62] Data for 1916 taken from the comparative historical tables in *Census of Manitoba*, 1926, Table 14, 39; *Census of Saskatchewan*, 1926, Table 14, 288; and *Census of Alberta*, 1926, Table 14, 574. Data for 1931 taken from *Census of Canada*, 1931, vol. 2, Table 45, 712-13.

[63] Kent Fedorowich, "Reconstruction and Resettlement: The Politicization of Irish Migration to Australia and Canada, 1919-29," *English Historical Review* 114, no. 459 (November 1999): 1143-78; and David Fitzpatrick, "Emigration, 1871-1921," in *A New History of Ireland*, vol. 6, *Ireland Under the Union (II), 1870-1921*, ed. W.E. Vaughn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 631-33.

[64] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1993), 101, 258.

[65] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming: The History of St. Brides* (St. Brides, AB: St. Brides Historical Society, 1995), 279.

[66] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 315, 360; and Rockglen Fiftieth Anniversary Committee, *The Rolling Hills of Home* (Rockglen, SK: Rockglen Fiftieth Anniversary Committee, 1979), 258.

[67] Bertha M. Speers, *A Cameo of the West: A Story of the Pioneers of the Present Namao School District, no. 24* (Namao, AB: Namao U.C.W., 1968), 309.

[68] Rosalind and District History Book Committee, *As the Wheels Turn: A History of Rosalind, Kelsey and Districts* (Rosalind, AB: Rosalind and District History Book Committee, n.d.), 308-09.

[69] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 56.

[70] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 56.

[71] Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish: A History* (New York: Longman, 2000), 182.

[72] Kent Fedorowich, "Reconstruction and Resettlement, 1145.

[73] Harper, "Enticing the Emigrant," 54.

[74] David Fitzpatrick, *The Two Irelands, 1912-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 214-15.

[75] Fedorowich, "Reconstruction and Resettlement," 1162-63.

[76] Fedorowich, "Reconstruction and Resettlement," 1166.

[77] Egan to Walker, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, 1-B, vol. 823, file 552-1-572, LAC, Ottawa.

[78] *Newtownards Chronicle*, 17 March 1923, 16 February 1924. See also 24 May 1924, 3 January 1925, 7 February 1925, 21 February 1925, 29 August 1925.

[79] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, 52.

[80] W.E. Vaughn and A.J. Fitzpatrick, eds., *Irish Historical Statistics*, 66-72. The calculation includes counties Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone, as well as Belfast county borough, but excludes Londonderry county borough because data on the latter is not available for 1926. The Catholic population of Londonderry county borough in 1911 was 22,923.

[81] Fedorowich, "The Problems of Disbandment: The Royal Irish Constabulary and Imperial Migration, 1919-29," *Irish Historical Studies* 30, no. 117 (May 1996): 88-91.

[82] Kent Fedorowich, "The Problems of Disbandment," 99-100, 105.

[83] Department Secretary Frank C. Blair to various immigration commissioners, 20-23 September 1922, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, Immigration Series 1-A-1, vol. 182, file 65067, LAC, Ottawa. Totals for the other provinces included Ontario (twenty-one), British Columbia (ten), Quebec (five) and New Brunswick (one).

[84] Chauvin, Ribstone and Districts History Book Committee, *Across the Years* (Chauvin, AB: The Committee, 1982), 870.

[85] W.J.C. Cherwinski, "A Miniature Coxey's Army: The British Harvesters' Toronto-to-Ottawa Trek of 1924," *Labour/Le Travail* 23 (Fall 1993): 142.

[86] John Albert Dean to Frank C. Blair [n.d.] and Blair to Dean, 14 March 1923, Department of Immigration and Colonization Records, RG 76, Immigration Series 1-A-1, vol. 182, file 65067, LAC, Ottawa.

[87] J.A. Schultz, "Canadian Attitudes Toward Empire Settlement, 1919-1930," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 1, no. 2 (January 1973): 237-42.

[88] Eric Richards, *Britannia's Children: Emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland Since 1600* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), 244-45.

[89] W.A. Carrothers, *Emigration From the British Isles, With Special Reference to the Development of the Overseas Dominions* (London: P.S. King and Son, Ltd., 1929), 264.

[90] Robert England, *The Colonization of Western Canada: A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement (1896-1934)* (London: P.S. King and Son, Ltd., 1936), 94-5.
[91] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 24-5; and Sarah Carter, "'An Infamous Proposal': Prairie Indian Reserve Land and Soldier Settlement after World War I," *Manitoba History* 37 (Spring/Summer 1999): 15, 20.
[92] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 2. Thirty-eight of the colonists immigrated directly from Ireland, while two other Irish-born settlers immigrated from Scotland. The remaining fourteen colonists included seven Scottish-born, six English-born, and one for which birthplace information was not available. County origins for the colonists were taken from family histories throughout the book.
[93] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 2.
[94] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 351.
[95] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 300.
[96] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 385.
[97] St. Brides Historical Society, *A Homecoming*, 406.

Chapter 4

"The Shamrock Belongs to No One Part of Ireland": Irish Associational Culture and Identity in Western Canada, 1905-1930

On St. Patrick's Day morning 1906, the citizens of Edmonton awoke to find that the British flag which normally flew above city hall had been replaced during the night by an Irish standard. Reporters from the *Edmonton Journal* questioned members of the police force, the fire brigade and several municipal employees in an effort to determine who was responsible, but to no avail. Though treating the episode in a lighthearted manner, the *Journal* could not resist editorializing on the propriety of raising the "Home Rule emblem" in place of the British flag, "which includes the Rose, the Thistle and the Shamrock."[1]

Whether meant as a serious political statement or a harmless prank, the incident encapsulated several themes salient to the articulation of Irishness in early twentieth-century western Canada. The fact that such an episode occurred in the Alberta capital pointed to the increased presence of the Irish across the region, with Irish identity now a matter of public concern outside of Winnipeg. Rather than raising the Irish flag over a private residence or business, the individual or individuals responsible had chosen city hall, with its potent symbolism as a seat of government, and implying the significance of the Irish in civic affairs. Most critically, the incident revealed the continued tension regarding the relationship between Irish identity and British imperialism, heightened by the resurgence of the Home Rule movement after 1905. Was the shamrock best honoured in relation to the rose and the thistle, as a constituent element of Britishness? Or should it be celebrated in isolation, coexisting with but not submerged within broader imperial or Canadian identities?

Issues such as these would define the boundaries of Irish associational culture across western Canada from 1905 through 1930, a period which saw the crystallization of two different types of organization: Irish Canadian and Irish nationalist. Irish Canadian societies situated the Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, in the context of Prairie regional growth and promoted the centrality of the Irish in the social, economic and political development of western Canada. Such societies were only secondarily concerned with the progress of Home Rule or events in Ireland, which were at best a distraction, at worst a source of embarrassment that raised uncomfortable questions about loyalty to Britain and empire. By contrast, Irish nationalist societies focused primarily on the struggle for Home Rule and eventually independence, defining their Irish identity in relation to the politics of the homeland rather than the position of the group in Prairie society. These two types of organization were not absolute. While Irish Canadian societies were primarily concerned with regional issues, no body identifying itself as Irish in the early twentieth century could fully avoid taking a position on Home Rule. Similarly, Irish nationalist societies were forced to balance their advocacy for Home Rule and eventual independence with the advancement of Irish interests in the Prairie West, particularly in relation to the issue of control over the Roman Catholic Church. Nonetheless, the distinction effectively captures the essence of what had become the parameters of Irish associational culture in early twentieth-century western Canada. Two different visions of Irishness had established a firm presence in the Prairie West, opposing though not mutually exclusive, one rooted in the Prairie West and reflecting the integration of the Irish into an emerging regional society, the other rooted in diaspora and reflecting the tumultuous politics of Ireland.

These parallel visions of Irishness competed for influence within western Canada's Irish communities in the first decades of the twentieth century, with the relative fortunes of each dictated by a variety of regional, national and international influences. In the decade prior to the Great War, Irish society activity flourished, fueled by the tremendous growth of the Irish population, both immigrant and intergenerational, across the Prairie West. Both variants of Irish associational culture took root in this period. Irish Canadian societies were harnessed by prominent Irish eager to promote the centrality of their group in the development of western Canada, while Irish nationalists rallied support for the resurgent Home Rule movement and introduced the Gaelic cultural revival to the region. The outbreak of the Great War put a halt to further associational growth and subsequent events in Ireland gave significant momentum to the region's Irish nationalist societies. The Easter Rebellion (1916) and the Anglo-Irish War (1919-21) mobilized Irish nationalists in the Prairie West, especially Winnipeg, who took a leading role in organizing local, regional and national campaigns to aid Ireland's struggle for independence. By contrast, Irish Canadian leaders, eager to prove their loyalty to Canada, Britain and empire, increasingly distanced themselves from public expressions of Irish identity in the first two years of the war. Mobilized by the events of Easter 1916, however, many of these leaders joined their nationalist counterparts in supporting Ireland's national aspirations in 1917-18, leading to an unprecedented expansion of Irish associational activity across the region in the immediate postwar period. The urgency that had driven support for Irish nationalism in western Canada waned with the achievement of Irish independence in 1922, leading to the equally rapid dissolution of the region's nationalist societies. At the same time, the resolution of Ireland's status as an independent state de-politicized expressions of Irish identity, facilitating the reemergence of specifically Irish Canadian societies in the early 1920s. Irish Canadian associational culture in this period fused the traditional celebration of Irish contributions to region and nation building with a celebration of Irish folk culture. Purged of all possible associations with anti-British sentiment or disloyalty, Irishness was celebrated as a colourful element of the western Canadian ethnic mosaic, totally compatible with Canadian citizenship and imperial loyalty.

In many ways, Irish society activity between 1905 and 1930 built upon a foundation established in late nineteenth-century Manitoba. Much like occurred in the non-sectarian societies that emerged in Winnipeg in the 1880s, the leadership of Irish Canadian societies was dominated by the business and professional classes and articulated an inclusive vision of Irishness that uniformly rejected religious or political discord. The efforts of many early twentieth-century nationalists to define Irishness along Catholic lines and establish close relations with the region's Francophones echoed similar efforts by the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba in the 1870s. And, as had been the case in the late nineteenth century, Irish identity manifested itself along distinctly regional lines. Irish Canadian associational culture was multilayered, fusing Irishness with elements of imperialism and Canadian nationalism, but was articulated primarily in a regional context. Thus, while Irish

Canadian leaders staked a claim for the shamrock alongside the rose and thistle as equal partners in empire building, they stressed the Prairie West as the greatest frontier of imperial expansion. While praising the political and economic contributions of prominent Irishmen in Canadian development, they emphasized that Canada's future greatness rested in the unlimited potential of western Canada, where Irish Canadians were taking a leading role in developing a new, vigorous and morally superior society.

Region was less central to the identity articulated by Irish nationalists, whose gaze was fixed more firmly on the Irish homeland, and unlike their Irish Canadian counterparts, nationalists established branches of societies already operating in Ireland, the United States and central and eastern Canada. With its rapidly growing Irish population, including thousands of immigrants leaving a highly politicized environment in early twentieth-century Ireland, the Prairie West became a critical region of growth for nationalist groups like the Ancient Order of Hibernians, whose membership elsewhere in Canada was in steady decline by the early 1900s. Irish nationalism also became a nexus along which deeper divisions within the Roman Catholic population of the Prairie West played out, most notably the struggle between Anglophones and Francophones for control of the western Church. Thus, while exercising a different type of influence on each faction, region was central to the development of both variants of Irish associational culture in this period.

Irish Associational Culture in Western Canada Prior to the Great War

The years from 1905 through 1914 represented the most vibrant period of Irish associational growth in western Canadian history. In addition to Winnipeg,

Table 25 Irish societies established in western Canada, 1905-27

Name	City	Year Established
Celtic Football Club	Winnipeg	1905
Irishmen's Association	Regina	1907
Ancient Order of Hibernians	Winnipeg	1908
Irish Association	Winnipeg	1908
Irish Association	Saskatoon	1908
Irish Association*	Prince Albert	1908
St. Patrick's Society	Calgary	1909
Ancient Order of Hibernians (Ladies's Auxiliary)	Winnipeg	1909
Irish Association	Edmonton	1909
Irish Canadian Amateur Athletic Association	Edmonton	1909
Ancient Order of Hibernians	Saskatoon	1911
St. Patrick's Society	Lloydminster	1911
St. Patrick's Society	Portage la Prairie	1912
Ancient Order of Hibernians	Regina	1912
United Irish League	Winnipeg	1913
Friends of Irish Freedom	Winnipeg	1919
Self-Determination for Ireland League	Various cities and towns throughout the region	1919
Daughters of Erin	Calgary	1922
Irish Canadian Association	Winnipeg	1922
St. Patrick's Society	Calgary	1922
Sons and Daughters of Erin	Regina	1926
St. Patrick's Society	Edmonton	1927

*Newspaper coverage of the St. Patrick's Day banquet hosted by the Irish Association of Winnipeg noted that it received a telegram of greeting from its sister society in Prince Albert: the formal name of the society was not given and cannot be confirmed, nor can the date it was established. It clearly was active by 1908, but may have been established earlier.

which remained the regional Irish metropolis, new societies were established in Portage la Prairie, Saskatoon, Regina, Yorkton, Prince Albert, Lloydminster, Calgary and Edmonton (table 25, above). This expansion stood in stark contrast to what was happening elsewhere in Canada. For example, Mark McGowan convincingly points to the growing irrelevance of Irishness in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Toronto as the city's Irish Catholic population increasingly moved away from its Irish heritage in favour of a broader Anglo-Canadian Catholic identity. This move was clearly reflected in the inexorable decline of Toronto's Irish societies such as the

Ancient Order of Hibernians, the largest Irish Catholic benevolent association in North America. Membership in the city's Hibernian branches peaked at 1,778 in 1905, falling to 1,460 by 1910 and continuing to fall thereafter until the Great War.[2] These observations echo those of Philip Currie, who identifies the years 1907 through 1909 as critical in the decline of Toronto's Hibernian membership.[3] By contrast, Hibernian influence in western Canada rose steadily before 1914, beginning in 1908 with the establishment of the organization's first branch in Winnipeg, which grew from a founding membership of seventy-five to nearly three hundred by spring 1911.[4] Further, while their fortunes continued to decline in central and eastern Canada, the Hibernians opened new branches in Regina in 1912 and Saskatoon in 1913.[5] Existing historiography on Irish identity in central and eastern Canada makes little mention of non-sectarian Irish societies, rendering a similar regional comparison of non-Catholic Irish associational culture impossible.[6] The evidence for the Prairie West, however, clearly reveals a significant increase in non-sectarian Irish associational activity between 1905 and 1914.

This rapid expansion was driven by the tremendous growth in the region's Irish population in the decade prior to the Great War, which increased demand for the mutual aid and benevolent services aimed at easing the social and economic transition of the newcomers. The Irish Association of Winnipeg, for example, provided information about the city to potential immigrants and new arrivals, and offered sick benefits, employment assistance and legal representation to members.[7] Ancient Order of Hibernian branches in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina maintained funeral funds and offered aid to ill, blind or otherwise infirm members.[8] The Irish Association of

Saskatoon provided similar benefits and in 1912 expanded its benevolent functions to include providing charitable assistance to any destitute Irish in the city.[9] Extant information on the services offered by Alberta's Irish societies is scarce, though intriguing hints are found in the pages of the *Newtownards Chronicle*, which occasionally printed updates on the lives of men and women who had immigrated to Canada from the Ards Peninsula in County Down. In January 1912, the *Chronicle* reported on the death and funeral of forty-three-year-old John Whitla, who had emigrated from Comber to Strathcona in 1907. Whitla was described as a valued member of the Edmonton Irish Association, many of whose members numbered among the one hundred people present at his funeral. The six pallbearers were all fellow immigrants from County Down who had known Whitla before he immigrated to Canada, including former Edmonton Irish Association president David McCullough.[10] The exact nature of any benefits or assistance given to Whitla's family is unclear, but the semi-official presence of the Edmonton Irish Association at his funeral is certainly suggestive of a benevolent role played by the organization beyond simple ethnic solidarity.

Western Canada's Irish societies also assisted in the social and cultural adaptation of new arrivals. In his study of British immigrant networks in early twentieth-century Winnipeg, A. Ross McCormack points to the importance of boarding houses, hostels and ethnic benevolent associations in easing the social and cultural adjustment of British immigrants, including those from Ulster, and helping them to overcome their sense of alienation after arriving in Winnipeg.[11] Irish societies in the Prairie West were thus also important social institutions at a time of increased Irish immigration to the region, providing a structure within which recent arrivals could meet and fraternize with their fellow countrymen. Both Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian associations hosted social events – ranging from lectures to dances, concerts, banquets and summer picnics. While some of these events were closed to all but society members, others were opened up to the wider Irish community, providing such associations with the opportunity to make their goals and objectives more broadly known.[12]

Irish societies also contributed to social life through the sponsorship of amateur sports teams and athletic clubs, which in general became an important form of respectable leisure in early twentieth-century Canada as the virtues of 'muscular Christianity' were promoted as an antidote to the supposedly emasculating and unhealthy influences of modern urban life.[13] The first Irish athletic body in western Canada was founded in March 1905 when a group of Ulster immigrants established the Celtic Football Club in Winnipeg. It had a membership of 150 by 1908 and participated in the Manitoba Football Association.[14] The Edmonton Irish Association, which grew from a nominal founding membership in 1909 to three hundred members by 1911, was particularly active in sports promotion, sponsoring the Irish Canadian Amateur Athletic Club and the Irish Canadian Baseball Club, and taking a leading role in the Hibernian Football Club.[15] The nationalist Ancient Order of Hibernians was equally active in the Manitoba capital, promoting sports such as rugby, Gaelic football and hurling through the pages of its official organ, the *Northwest Review*. The Hibernians hosted western Canada's first hurling match at their 1914 summer picnic, while prominent members such as P.J. Mulvihill, Neil

Carey and Patrick Shea served as executive officers in the Provincial Gaelic Football Committee and the Shamrock Rugby Football Club.[16]

Irish Canadian and Irish nationalist societies thus had much in common. Both were born out of the same context of regional population growth, both offered comparable benefits to a predominantly middle- and working-class membership, and both took a leading role in the social and cultural life of their respective communities. Sponsorship of athletics, however, also pointed to the fundamental difference between Irish Canadian and Irish nationalist associational culture in prewar western Canada. As Paul Darby and David Hassan have argued, Irish involvement in sports throughout the diaspora served multiple goals, with some advocates using sport as a means to emphasize ethnic pride and exclusiveness and others using it to facilitate integration and even assimilation into their new social and cultural environments.[17] This dichotomy played out clearly in the Prairie West, with Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian societies stressing different dimensions of Irishness through their promotion and sponsorship of sports teams. Hurling and Gaelic football, for example, were strongly associated with the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Gaelic cultural revival in Ireland.[18] Thus, their endorsement by Irish nationalists was an overtly political act which fit well with the Hibernian mandate to work for the "advancement of the principles of Irish nationality" and to rally support for Home Rule in Ireland.[19] By contrast, Irish Canadian societies in the Prairie West followed the example of Irish Catholics in early twentieth-century Toronto, explicitly avoiding Gaelic athletics in favour of popular North American sports like baseball, football and track and field to stress their integration into mainstream Canadian society.[20] For them, the cultivation of specific involvement in sports was part of a much larger goal of placing the Irish at the forefront of constructing a new, vigorous and morally superior society in the Prairie West. Morris Mott has noted how Winnipeg's leading citizens viewed organized sports as critical to developing the physical and moral strength of its citizens who would form the backbone of nation and empire.[21] Immigrants from the United Kingdom had taken the lead in this project in Manitoba since the late nineteenth century, and by the early twentieth century, Anglophone ethnic societies were sponsoring athletic clubs in other Prairie urban centres as well.[22] In addition, organized sports became an increasingly important element of civic promotion and boosterism across the region in the prewar years.[23] For Irish Canadian leaders, then, involvement in organized sports had nothing to do with nurturing Gaelic culture or forging closer emotional ties with the Irish homeland. Rather, it fit into their broader agenda of promoting respectable Irish citizenship in a developing regional society.

Thus, despite broad similarities, these two variants of Irish associational culture were largely defined by their differences, both in terms of their respective associational goals and in terms of their self-definition as Irish. The appearance of Irish Canadian societies reflected the rise of a regionally conscious elite, primarily focused on harnessing these new associations as vehicles to promote the Irish as leading citizens at the forefront of western Canadian development, and articulating a regional vision of Irishness that took little interest in the politics of the Irish homeland and even less in the position of the Irish outside the Prairie West. By contrast, nationalists promoted a diasporic vision of Irishness, positioning western Canada's

Irish as part of a global community dedicated to the preservation of Irish culture abroad and supporting the cause of Home Rule in Ireland. Regional citizenship was relevant to Irish nationalists only insofar as it could be reconciled with the broader objectives of nurturing Irish culture and providing support to the Home Rule movement. These two conceptions of Irishness would shape the contours of Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian associational activity through the prewar years.

The essential difference between these two variants of Irish associational culture was reflected in their different organizational structures. The two Irish nationalist associations putting in an appearance, the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the United Irish League, were international organizations with an extensive presence in the United Kingdom and the United States. The Hibernians set up their first Canadian branch in New Brunswick in 1887 and gradually expanded across central and eastern Canada over the next two decades. When Winnipeg's Hibernian branch, the first in western Canada, was established in 1908, the order was already active in six Canadian provinces with a national membership of approximately six thousand.[24] Established in 1898 as the central organization of the Irish Parliamentary Party, the United Irish League was brought to North America in 1901.[25] Its first western Canadian branch was formed in Winnipeg in 1913 under Samuel Jordan, an Irish Protestant immigrant from Belfast who had been actively involved in the Home Rule movement since the 1890s.[26]

The spread of Irish Canadian societies across the Prairie West in the prewar years did not follow the model of associational growth adopted by Irish nationalists. Rather than establishing divisions of existing Irish associations based in Ireland, their founders opted for new societies, connected in a regional network. The Irishmen's Association of Regina, for example, appears to have played a role in the early organization of the Irish Association of Winnipeg. According to the *Regina Leader*, Regina secretary R.J. Browne met with Winnipeg delegates in 1907 to harmonize the two associations' bylaws and constitutions. Available evidence cannot confirm that the final products were indeed identical, though each put into place membership policies that were explicitly non-sectarian and non-political.[27] In 1910, the president of the Saskatoon Irish Association paid tribute to the spread across the region of Irish associations that "formed a place where Irishmen of every creed could meet as friends."[28] The network linking the region's Irish Canadian societies often revealed itself during St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Irish Canadian societies on the Prairies routinely received telegrams of fraternal greeting from sister associations in other cities; at the 1911 Irish Association of Winnipeg banquet, for example, telegrams were read from Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and Regina.[29] Irish Canadian societies also occasionally hosted guest speakers from sister associations in the West and paid tribute to the region's leading Irishmen. In 1913, for example, the Irish Association of Winnipeg drank a toast in memory of one of Calgary's most prominent Irish citizens, James 'Paddy' Nolan, who immigrated from County Limerick in 1889 and became one of the city's leading lawyers.[30]

The differences between Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian associations to which their organizational structures attested were best illustrated by St. Patrick's Day, whose celebrations remained the most critical platform from which to project a particular vision of Irishness to the wider population. St. Patrick's Day events organized by Irish Canadian societies paid homage to the role that the Irish had already played in the building of the Prairie West, and placed the Irish firmly at the centre of its continued development. Speakers at events hosted by the Saskatoon Irish Association, for example, went so far as to declare that the "destiny of Saskatoon, the most remarkable city of the West, is in the hands of Irishmen."[31] Further to the east, one of the most common themes voiced by the Irish Association of Winnipeg was the prominence of Irishmen in the city's political life.[32] The claim was not without foundation. Members of the Irish Association of Winnipeg between 1908 and 1913 included Thomas Sharpe (alderman, 1900-03; mayor, 1904-06); William S. Evans (controller, 1908; mayor, 1909-11); Lendrum McMeans (alderman, 1909-10); J.G. Latimer (alderman, 1901-06; controller, 1908); R.A. Manning (alderman, 1907-08); and Thomas Wilson (alderman, 1907-08). Two other aldermen from this period, Edward Cass (1909-11) and J. Willoughby (1908-11), were also Irish but not involved in any of the city's Irish societies. In addition to civic politicians, the membership of the Irish Association included two provincial government ministers: Hon. Robert Rogers (MPP, 1899-1911; Minister of Public Works, 1900-11), and Hon. J.H. Howden (MPP, 1903-15).[33]

In addition to highlighting the prominence of their ethnic group in local and provincial politics, Irish Canadian societies used St. Patrick's Day celebrations to raise issues of civic or regional importance, and to assert publicly their faith in the Prairie West's potential for growth and development. In 1908, for example, Winnipeg city controller and Irish Association member J.G. Latimer expressed his confidence in Winnipeg's inevitable future as the greatest city in Canada. Reflecting the boundless optimism of the wheat boom years, other speakers lauded western Canada as the 'last great west' and both celebrated Winnipeg's status as the regional metropolis and anticipated its soon playing the same role in the nation as a whole.[34] St. Patrick's Day became an occasion for the mayor and other civic leaders to report on public works, the health of the city's economy, and other municipal affairs.[35] Attention to such issues was reminiscent of Winnipeg's St. Patrick's Day banquets of the early 1880s, which offered toasts to the city's commercial and agricultural interests and paid tribute in song to the Canadian Pacific Railway. By using St. Patrick's Day events to highlight civic and regional affairs, a coterie of activists furthered the claim of its group to regional prominence. Not only had the Irish played an important role in western Canadian development, but the continued health and progress of the Prairie West was also advertised as the predominant concern of its Irish citizens.

While Ireland was peripheral to Irish Canadian celebrations of St. Patrick's Day, it was central to those hosted by Irish nationalist societies, which used their events to rally support for Home Rule. In his 1913 address in Regina, the Canadian director of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Charles F. Foy, delivered a strong indictment of British rule in Ireland, focusing on the injustice of the Act of Union that had brought Ireland into the United Kingdom in 1800. He countered claims by opponents of Home Rule about Ireland's supposed inability to govern its own affairs, asking the audience to consider a long line of distinguished Irish statesmen, orators and religious figures. "Then tell me," he closed defiantly, that "Ireland can't govern herself."[36] In 1914, when J.M. Cleary of Minneapolis addressed the Winnipeg Hibernians, he praised contemporary advocates of Home Rule in the British Parliament such as United Irish League founder Thomas P. O'Connor, Irish Party leader John Redmond and prominent Irish Party figure John Dillon.[37] In that same year, the Winnipeg branch of the United Irish League began its St. Patrick's Day banquet with toasts to "the Irish Party," "the day we celebrate" and "Ireland: a nation."[38] Irish nationalists also used St. Patrick's Day events to honour past icons of the Irish nationalist movement. At the 1914 United Irish League banquet, for example, Canon Murray celebrated the fact that Ireland, despite its sorrowful history, continued to attract the devotion of its children throughout the world.[39] Daniel O'Connell, the nineteenth-century statesman who led the Catholic emancipation and repeal movements, was commonly celebrated as the greatest political leader in Irish history, a man whose steadfast devotion to Ireland's freedom made him an example worthy of emulation by all.[40]

The urgency of the Irish nation-building project also made Irish nationalists more receptive than their Irish Canadian counterparts to the participation of women in associational activity. Irish nationalist activity in western Canada appears to have mirrored the "gender-based division of labour"[41] that defined the movement in the Irish homeland – men were expected to assume political and leadership roles, while women were responsible for fostering national sentiment and identity. While historians such as Louise Ryan have emphasized the martial role taken by Irish women in the independence movement, it is clear that the dominant role assigned to women in nationalist activity was as "culture-bearers," responsible for transmitting identity to the next generation of devoted patriots.[42]

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians was brought to Winnipeg in 1909 and grew rapidly from a founding membership of twenty-five to over two hundred by the end of 1912.[43] The Ladies' Auxiliary was a relatively young institution when introduced to the Manitoba capital, having only been active in North America for fifteen years. The first branch had formed in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1894,[44] and while the organization is known to have spread through the United States, the extent of its operations in Canada is unclear. Canadian historiography makes no mention of the Ladies' Auxiliary, though a report from the 1914 Hibernian convention in Ontario notes the "continued spread" of the auxiliary, confirming that the organization was active in that province.[45]

The United Irish League went even further in harnessing women's support by admitting them as full members:[46] it was one of only two Irish associations active in North America to take this step prior to the Great War, the other being the Gaelic League, which had a strong presence in the United States, although the extent of its activities in Canada in unclear. The proportion of the United Irish League's original members who were women is not known, though detailed press coverage of a recruitment drive launched for the Winnipeg branch in February 1914 yields some insight into the extent of women's participation. Of the sixty-three new members initiated over the next two months, eighteen were women.[47] Women were clearly a minority in the League and do not appear to have held any leadership positions, but their ability to join as full members stood in stark contrast to the membership policies of most Irish societies at the time.

The principal role played by women in Irish nationalist associational activity was in the field of education. The future prospects of a united, prosperous Ireland after independence would be improved if it could draw upon the support of a diaspora educated in the principles of Irish nationality and infused with pride in the history and accomplishments of the Irish nation. As such, Irish nationalists made the education of the next generation of Irish Catholics a priority. At its national convention in Trenton, New Jersey, in 1898, the Hibernians first promoted the idea of establishing an Irish History Program in schools throughout North America, assigning the task to the Ladies' Auxiliary.[48] In Winnipeg, the woman described as the "mother" of the city's Irish history program was Ladies' Auxiliary president Margaret Tobin who, in conjunction with other leading Hibernians, began to organize the program in November 1913.[49] The first Irish history competition was held at Immaculate Conception School in spring 1914, and by September 1915, Irish history had been included in the curriculum of four other Winnipeg Catholic schools: St. Mary's, St. Edward's, St. Ignatius and St. Mary's Academy.[50] From 1917 onward, the Hibernians used their annual St. Patrick's Day celebration to raise money for prizes and textbooks to support the program, which, by May 1920, had embraced over one thousand Irish Catholic children in Winnipeg.[51]

The agenda of the Irish history program was openly nationalist. Patrick J. Henry, one of Winnipeg's leading Hibernians and most unapologetic Irish nationalists, described the history program as the most important project ever sponsored by the Hibernians and the Ladies' Auxiliary. Arguing that the Irish had "become prey of sinister influences ingeniously calculated to make them ashamed of their race and its ideals," and warning against the consequences of such intellectual slavery, he stressed the need to teach children to take pride in their history on the eve of Ireland's emancipation from British rule.[52] Henry's position was a strong declaration of the diasporic focus of Irish nationalist associational culture, as the education of Irish children in Winnipeg was given urgency by the rapid progress of the Home Rule movement in Ireland. The ambitions of Irish nationalists could not be achieved without the active participation of women, whose traditional role as 'mothers of the nation' was harnessed to prepare the next generation for the achievement of Irish independence.

Irish Canadian societies made no effort to incorporate the participation of women in the prewar years and appear to have been largely reluctant to even allow them to attend the annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The Irishmen's Association of Regina was an exception, inviting women to attend all functions from the time of its establishment in 1907. Women attended the Irish Association of Saskatoon's banquet for the first time in 1909; the following year, however, *Saskatoon Phoenix* noted that women were absent, and they do not appear to have attended in subsequent years.[53] Further, there is no indication that other non-sectarian Irish societies in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, Edmonton and Calgary ever allowed women to attend their St. Patrick's Day events prior to the Great War, and none admitted women as members at any time.

The exclusion of women from Irish Canadian society events is particularly notable given the willingness of these associations to promote social reform movements in which western Canadian women played a leading role. At the 1909 St. Patrick's Day banquet in Regina, for instance, Rev. Harmon Jones delivered a strong address endorsing temperance. In that same year, the secretary of the Calgary St. Patrick's Society praised the leading role taken by the Irish in temperance work, highlighting the success of the Father Matthew Society in Ireland.[54] And at least one Irish Canadian society, the Irish Association of Winnipeg, went beyond social reform movements and commented on women's participation in politics, endorsing women's suffrage in 1913 and identifying the Manitoba capital as the home of the "militant suffragettes of Western Canada."[55] Notably, however, Irish Canadian societies showed little interest in such campaigns beyond offering rhetorical support during the annual St. Patrick's Day ritual. Endorsing women's suffrage or prohibition reflected the ambition of prominent Irish Canadians to promote themselves as civic leaders, but their reluctance to allow women to attend St. Patrick's Day events, let alone join Irish Canadian societies as members, pointed to their vision of Irish associational culture as exclusively male space. In other words, if Irish nationalists harnessed women because they were deemed essential to the success of the nation-building project, the emphasis of Irish Canadian associational culture on promoting the Irish within the Prairie region left little role for the active participation of women.

Both Irish Canadian and Irish nationalist associational culture flourished in western Canada from 1907 through 1912, but thereafter Irish Canadian activity started to decline. In 1911, the Irish Association of Winnipeg hosted its largest ever

St. Patrick's Day event, attended by 250 people, but by 1913, attendance at the annual celebrations had fallen to 150 and the following year nothing was held at all.[56] By 1914, only two Irish Canadian societies remained: the St. Patrick's Society of Portage la Prairie and the Irishmen's Association of Regina. At the same time, Irish nationalist activity was expanding – as illustrated by the establishment of the first branch of the United Irish League in Winnipeg and of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Saskatoon, both in 1913.

The most probable explanation for the divergent fortunes of Irish Canadian and Irish nationalist associational activity in 1913-14 is the intensification of the Home Rule crisis in Ireland. In 1910, British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, whose Liberal Party was two seats short of a majority in the House of Commons, agreed to introduce Home Rule legislation in return for the political support of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The traditional barrier to the passage of Home Rule for Ireland, the veto power of the British House of Lords, disappeared with the passage of a new law prohibiting it to scuttle a piece of legislation passed by the House of Commons more than twice. The Third Home Rule Bill was passed in 1912, and while the House of Lords vetoed it twice, it could not prevent its implementation. Unionists staged massive demonstrations in Ulster from 1912 through 1914, while paramilitary forces on both sides of the struggle armed for conflict. With Home Rule scheduled to become law in September 1914, Ireland appeared heading for civil war.[57] The escalation of the Home Rule crisis gave Irish nationalist associational activity increased urgency in western Canada, as the nation-building project appeared to be entering its final and most critical stage. By contrast, the threat of rebellion in Ireland raised unwelcome questions about Irish loyalty, complicating Irish Canadian efforts to reconcile Irishness with a British identity. Much as had been the case in the 1890s, those Irish not explicitly devoted to the cause of Irish nationalism backed away from their public identification as Irish, which hampered Irish Canadian associational activity in the region. The anticipated civil war in Ireland, however, failed to materialize, as Irish Home Rule was suspended with the outbreak of the Great War.

The Great War and Irishness in Western Canada

The Great War had a profound impact on Irish associational culture in the Prairie West. For Irish nationalists, the conflict accelerated the momentum built during the Home Rule crisis. The national question, temporarily put aside with the suspension of Home Rule in September 1914 and the enthusiastic support of the Irish Parliamentary Party for the British war effort, exploded again with the outbreak and brutal suppression of the 1916 Easter Uprising in Dublin. Western Canada's most militant Irish nationalists, the Winnipeg branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, unleashed an attack against the "bastard system of English imperialism" that kept Ireland under British domination and organized a campaign to pressure the Canadian government to support Irish Home Rule at the postwar peace settlement.[58] At the same time, the Great War exacerbated deeply-rooted social and political tensions within Winnipeg's Catholic population, which further sharpened Irish nationalist identity in the city. By 1918, Irish nationalists had fused international and local issues into a comprehensive and sustained critique of British and Canadian imperialism.

If the outbreak of war lent further momentum to the region's most devoted Irish nationalists, it dealt a severe blow to Irish Canadian associational culture: already in decline by 1914, activity virtually ceased in the first two years of hostilities. Like their nationalist counterparts, however, Irish Canadian leaders were deeply influenced by the events of Easter 1916. Many reevaluated their opposition to Home Rule and condemned Britain's violent crackdown in Ireland. Though their criticism never reached the vitriolic levels characteristic of nationalists, Irish Canadian activists nonetheless argued that Britain's stubborn unwillingness to grant Home Rule to Ireland was both shortsighted and a direct violation of the principles of freedom and self-determination upon which the war was supposedly being fought.

It was this common stance on Home Rule that made the war years so critical for the Irish in western Canada. For Irish nationalists, the bloodshed and anarchy in Ireland after 1916 clearly validated their claims regarding the inherent brutality of English imperialism and the untenable nature of continued British rule in Ireland. For Irish Canadians, the post-1916 violence was not an indictment of the imperial system, but rather the result of the misguided policies of British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Further, their demands that Ireland's case be heard at the postwar peace conference were made first and foremost as Canadians, who had earned through their country's war service both the right and the moral responsibility to speak on such issues, rather than as Irishmen. Irish Canadians and Irish nationalists approached the issue of Home Rule from fundamentally different perspectives, but both agreed on its necessity. The war thus created the conditions by which the two variants of Irish associational culture found sufficient common ground for cooperation, setting the stage for the explosion of Irish associational activity across the Prairie West between 1919 and 1922.

Existing historiography on the Irish in Canada during the Great War has generally downplayed the strength of Irish nationalism during this period, stressing instead the importance of the conflict as one of the final stages in the assimilation of the country's Irish Catholics. While conceding that divisions remained among Irish Catholics in Montreal, Robin Burns points to the formation of the Irish Canadian Rangers as indicative of Irish Catholic support for Canada's war effort along the lines of non-sectarian unity.[59] More generally, Terrence Fay contends that the war pushed Canadian Catholics into closer collaboration with their Protestant counterparts and that Catholics "offered the blood of their children as part of the price to be paid to halt blatant imperialism and to take ownership in Canadian society."[60] Finally, Mark McGowan argues that widespread support for the war represented the clearest indication of the loyal Canadianism of Toronto's Irish Catholics, who had largely abandoned Irishness in favour of a broader Anglo-Catholic imperialism.[61]

In some respects, the wartime experience of the Irish in the Prairie West followed these patterns detected elsewhere in Canada. While it is difficult to quantify the extent to which militant Irish nationalism attracted support in the region, the available evidence suggests that its appeal was limited. In his study of Irish nationalism in Manitoba, Richard Davis argues that the causes of Home Rule and independence received little sympathy in Winnipeg, and notes how in 1919 the Hibernians complained about the indifference of local Irish to the progress of Home Rule.[62] Further, there is little evidence that militant nationalism attracted much support in Alberta or Saskatchewan. Certainly for the majority of this period, as with the rest of Canada, only a minority of the region's Irish actively supported the cause of Irish independence.

With that caveat in mind, the Prairie West was home to a devoted core of Irish nationalists – identified with the Winnipeg branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians – who were among the most militant in Canada during this period. The Winnipeg Hibernians present a fascinating case study in the negotiation of Irish nationalism and identity in wartime western Canada, with the influence of the violence and unprecedented urgency of the national question in Ireland mediated by Canadian considerations. While most Irish Catholics in Canada enthusiastically backed the war effort, the Winnipeg Hibernians intensified their support for Irish independence while simultaneously emerging as a fierce critic of several aspects of Canadian domestic policy. They thus played a critical role in sustaining Irish nationalism not only within the region but also throughout Canada, until the postwar years saw public opinion become more sympathetic to Ireland's national aspirations. Davis, in speaking of Irish nationalism in Manitoba, is correct to say that the Hibernians were never fully satisfied with the level of support they received in Winnipeg, but he seriously underestimates the extent of their militancy and their devotion to the cause of Irish independence.

From the outset of the Great War, most Hibernian branches in Canada made a concerted effort to prove their loyalty to the Allied cause by distancing themselves from the pro-German and anti-British declarations of their American counterparts.[63] The files of Canadian national vice-president Charles Foy, for example, contain letters from Hibernian members and branch officers condemning the political stance taken by their American counterparts in the early stages of the Great War, with many correspondents making particular note of anti-British editorials in the American order's national organ, the *National Hibernian*.[64] The Great War placed tremendous strain on the relationship between the American and Canadian Hibernians and led some branch officers in Canada to resign their commissions. In February 1916, Thomas Molloy, provincial president of the Saskatchewan Hibernians, wrote to announce his resignation, stating that he flatly refused to associate with an organization seemingly devoted to little other than fostering anti-British sentiment.[65]

Noticeably absent from this parade of condemnation, however, were the Winnipeg Hibernians. In December 1914, branch president D.O. McDonald informed Foy that he had received complaints from the assistant postmaster regarding anti-British editorials in the *National Hibernian*.[66] Neither McDonald then nor the Winnipeg Hibernians later, however, threaten to break their ties with their American counterparts, and the branch maintained concrete links with the American order throughout the Great War. The guest speaker at the Winnipeg Hibernians' 1917 St. Patrick's Day dinner, for example, was the president of the Ladies' Auxiliary in the United States, Mary McWhorter. She would also visit the Manitoba capital on two other occasions in 1917-18, to distribute prizes to the winners of the Irish history competition.[67] The Hibernians' invitation to McWhorter was an act of defiance in the face of some public hostility, reflected in the fact that in 1918, all of the city's newspapers refused to publish the contest's winners.[68]

Far from distancing themselves from anti-British rhetoric, the Winnipeg Hibernians were consistent and fierce critics of Great Britain in the pages of their official organ, the *Northwest Review*, especially after the events of Easter 1916. Patrick J. Murphy, a former executive officer and one of the city's most vocal Hibernians, took the lead. Calling the execution of Irish prisoners captured after the uprising as cold-blooded murder, he drew an explicit comparison between what he characterized as the extreme imperialism of British rule in Ireland and the German conquest of Belgium, making Ireland and Belgium both victims of tyrannical aggression.[69] Later that summer, Murphy voiced the opinion that Ireland's thirst for liberty could "only be extinguished by the complete extermination of the Irish race," a sentiment that clearly flirted with full-scale revolt as the solution to Ireland's unresolved national question, although the Winnipeg Hibernian branch itself never openly endorsed such a position. Murphy also noted that rhetoric and political agitation had traditionally accomplished less to advance Ireland's national interests than "taking advantage of England's difficulties" during wartime, pointing specifically to how Ireland's first modern parliament was won with the implicit threat of force by Henry Grattan and the Irish Volunteers in 1782 during the final stages of the American Revolutionary War.[70]

The type of anti-British backlash expressed by Murphy and other Hibernians in the wake of Easter 1916 was not entirely unique in Canada. Despite their insistence that Irish Catholic nationalism was muted during the war years, both McGowan and Burns note sharp criticism in Toronto and Montreal of Britain's handling of the uprising. However, both qualify the strength of this backlash by arguing that it was temporary and did not extend to opposition to the Canadian war effort. As McGowan argues, condemnation by Toronto's Irish Catholic community of British atrocities in the aftermath of Easter 1916 and during the subsequent Anglo-Irish War was aimed at British Prime Minister Lloyd George rather than the British crown or people.[71] The anti-British rhetoric of the Winnipeg Hibernians made no such distinction, however, and remained relatively consistent through 1917-18. The *Northwest Review* printed numerous editorials and letters condemning British rule in Ireland as oppressive and comparing it to German actions in Belgium, suggesting that only willful ignorance and a "monocle" could blind observers to the obvious parallels.[72] The level of anti-British vitriol was such that one offended reader claimed to have passed copies of the newspaper, and Murphy's letters in particular, to Canadian censorship authorities, though there is no evidence in the files of the chief press censor of measures taken by the Canadian government.[73]

The utterances of Winnipeg Hibernians, figuring among the most intensely anti-British rhetoric in Canada during the war years, demonstrated the impact of international events on an Irish association and individuals persistently identifying themselves as part of an international diaspora, now further galvanized by events in the homeland as the Irish nationalist project entered a period of severe crisis. The wartime militancy of the Winnipeg Hibernian branch also extended to domestic affairs in Canada. The major focus was specifically the erosion of French language rights and the persecution of ethnic minorities in the Prairie West, but individual members also complained about the class inequities of the war effort, echoing the view of farmer and labour groups in the region that the war was being fought "to the last poor man's dollar."[74] While overseas events fueled the Winnipeg Hibernians' condemnation of Britain, local conditions shaped their attitudes to domestic issues to sharpen their sense Irish identity and ultimately fuse their nationalism with a broader denunciation of Canadian government policies. It is this fusion of circumstances, international and domestic, that accounts for the strength of Hibernian militancy in Winnipeg.

The key local factor driving Hibernian criticism was the deep division that existed between Irish and French Catholics not only in the Manitoba capital but also within the Anglophone Catholic population itself. Intensified by the pressures of war, this division had its roots in the early twentieth-century struggle between French and Anglophone Catholics for control over the Roman Catholic Church in western Canada. In 1906, a group of prominent Irish Catholics demanded that Archbishop Adélard Langevin of St. Boniface consent to a new archdiocese in Winnipeg, to be presided over by an Anglophone archbishop. This demand launched a bitter struggle between Langevin and Irish Catholic leaders that ended in victory for the latter with the erection of the archdiocese of Winnipeg in December 1915 and the appointment of Alfred Arthur Sinnott as archbishop.[75] The archdiocese of Winnipeg was given authority over the territory in Manitoba west of the Red River, while the archdiocese of St. Boniface was "confined" to lands east of the river.[76] Irish-French tensions were further exasperated by the expansion of the Catholic Church Extension Society established in 1908 to promote the Anglicization of central and eastern European Catholic immigrants, and regarded by Langevin, not without justification, as an Irish plot to weaken French Catholic influence in the Prairie West.[77] Wartime events, specifically the attack on Francophone school rights in Manitoba in 1916, amplified these tensions.

Deep divisions within Manitoba's Irish Catholic population thus formed the domestic context within which Irish nationalist identity was negotiated prior to and during the Great War as prominent Winnipeg Hibernians, most notably provincial president Patrick J. Henry, decried the divisions emerging within the regional Catholic population. In the process, they fused their diasporic identity as exiles of oppressive English imperialism with domestic affairs in Canada, standing alongside the latest victim of English domination, French Canadian Catholics.[78] This inter-ethnic solidarity was publicly well established by the outbreak of the Great War, echoing the close relations in the 1870s between the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and the archdiocese of St. Boniface. In April 1914, for example, Hibernian president Patrick J. Henry thanked Father A.A. Cherrier for his support of the Irish history program in Winnipeg's Catholic schools, calling it an example of France's traditional friendship with Ireland and historic role in aiding the "preservation of Irish faith and nationality." Thomas J. O'Neill, the so-called father of the Winnipeg Hibernian movement, went so far as to criticize the provincial chaplain of the Ontario Hibernians, Bishop Michael Fallon of London, for contributing to the tensions between Irish and French Catholics through his public censure of the French Canadian nationalist leader, Henri Bourassa.[79] The specific event to which O'Neill referred is not clear, but was likely related to the progress of Regulation 17 in Ontario. A fierce critic of bilingual education in the province, Fallon was a driving force behind the legislation that placed restrictions on French language instruction in the province. Bourassa responded by touring Ontario and denouncing the legislation.[80]

The most explicit stand that the Winnipeg branch took as a collective unit concerning attacks on French language rights in Canada was a resolution passed in February 1916. It is worth quoting at some length. Declaring that "no two people ever had so much in common" as the Irish and French, the text stated:

> The Winnipeg division of the AOH, taking the history of their own people as a guide, hereby denounce and condemn as bigoted, unchristian, and as calculated to work serious injury to the best interests of Canada and the Empire, the attempt being made in this country to destroy the French and other non-English languages. That, being convinced that the main attack is directed v. our church, we hereby call upon all Irish-Catholics in Canada to remember that during the long, dreary centuries of her martyrdom for faith and fatherland, the only true friend of Ireland was Catholic France; that later, when our people ravaged by famine and pestilence, the direct result of the still more pestilential laws, were exiled from their native land, and thrown upon the rocky shores of Canada, it was the poor Catholic peasants of New France who nursed them back to health, or tenderly laid them in their last long sleep in consecrated soil, that we reach out now in return a helping hand to these same people struggling to maintain their language and their rights.[81]

The language of this resolution was the clearest example of the fusion of diasporic and local elements that marked Hibernian identity during the war, creating a discourse of Franco-Celtic nationalist unity based on a common history of oppression at the hands of the English. Though focusing primarily on French language rights, the Winnipeg Hibernians also expressed support for other non-Anglophone Catholics targeted for persecution during the war. In March 1916, the branch passed a resolution protesting against "the unseemly and unfounded" statements made in the provincial parliament by Liberal MPP Donald A. Ross, who criticized the Ukrainian Catholic Bishop Nykyta Budka. The specific incident referred to by the resolution is unclear, though the Hibernians denounced the comments as designed to heighten "the racial antagonisms already too pronounced" in Manitoba.[82]

Winnipeg Hibernians' consciousness of their position as the standard bearers of Irish Catholic nationalism in the Prairie West was further heightened by the fact that the leaders of the campaign against Langevin and Francophone rights in Winnipeg were overwhelmingly of Irish birth or descent.[83] Henry noted contemptuously that those involved chose to identify themselves in public as English-speaking Catholics, a term he denounced as being a "soulless one…[which] has neither history, tradition, nor inspiration behind it." Other correspondents to the *Northwest Review* characterized these self-identified English-speaking Catholics as misguided and Anglo-Saxonized.[84] This disgust was rooted in Winnipeg Hibernian conceptions of the inseparable relationship between religion and nationality. A 1909 profile of the branch, for example, noted that "Hibernianism links religion with nationality and it stands for both; it couples with the glories of an ancient race the blessings of a living faith."[85] In the view of Hibernians, the fact that the campaign against French Catholic rights in Winnipeg was led by Irish Catholics who had abandoned their Irish identity highlighted the dangers of assimilation into an Anglo-Canadian collective.

To counter the threat of assimilation, the Hibernians sought to foster pride in their Irish heritage and identity among Irish Catholics. The aforementioned Irish history program and promotion of Gaelic athletics were part of this agenda. Another feature was the sustained effort to protect the public image of Irishness by vigorously contesting derogatory representations of the Irish in print and on stage, reflecting a continental movement launched by Hibernians throughout North America in 1904.[86] While the Winnipeg Hibernians had actively campaigned against such offensive characterizations prior to 1914, their efforts clearly intensified during the war years. For example, they insisted that the city's St. Patrick's Day events, both public and private, should emphasize respectability and refinement rather than the drunken, bumbling "stage Paddy" figure so typical of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century representations of Irish Catholics.[87] Also, in February 1917, members of the Winnipeg branch met to discuss how to raise awareness among the city's merchants about the inappropriateness of selling what they characterized as offensive material which drew upon the Paddy image.[88] The most explicitly political complaint, aired in the pages of the *Northwest Review*, was P. Callaghan's 1915 protest against the sale in Winnipeg of a children's picture book in Winnipeg titled *Babies of All Nations*. Callaghan noted that while the English child was shown to be clean, healthy and living in a fine home, the Irish child came across as a "half-starved, dirty, half-naked little creature…presenting a shamrock to a pig." Condemning the book as openly racist, Callaghan ended his tirade with the observation that the only legitimate justification for depicting Irish children in such a manner would be to show the results of tyrannical English rule in Ireland.[89] The escalation of such a reactionary response in Winnipeg to negative portrayals of the Irish during the war years echoes the pattern detected by Thomas Rowland in his study of Irish Catholic nationalists in the early twentieth-century United States. Rowland argued that Irish Catholic nationalists in the United States grew increasingly sensitive to perceived slights against the Irish national character as they faced the increasingly difficult challenge of balancing support for Irish Home Rule with the realities of living in a country that in the early years of the war was moving rapidly closer to an alliance with Great Britain.[90]

Winnipeg Hibernian concerns over assimilation, and their sensitivity to negative public representations of the Irish, had a strong class dimension as well. Conclusions in this regard must necessarily be tentative because, unlike the case with Home Rule and linguistic rights, the Winnipeg Hibernians did not pass resolutions or organize meetings specifically to address class issues. That said, the Winnipeg Hibernian discourse of respectable Irishness had a clear class dimension, as leading members painted themselves as the representatives of common middle- and working-class Irish Catholics against a vanguard of selfish individuals whose assimilation had given rise to crass materialism and contempt for their countrymen. A correspondent identifying himself as Hibernian wrote to the *Northwest Review* in April 1916 to voice his regret:

> that a certain number of our people, bearing good old Irish Catholic names, who having acquired a certain social position or accumulated a few thousand dollars worth of this world's goods, take the greatest pleasure in showing off their supposed superiority to their less fortunate (financially) Irish Catholic fellow citizen.[91]

Profiles of the Winnipeg Hibernians, both during and prior to the Great War, characterized the organization as an egalitarian one, defending the principles of the Catholic faith and Irish nationality against the pretensions of those who claimed leadership of the Anglophone Catholic population.[92] As noted earlier, Hibernian membership, at least at the outset, was largely middle and working class, with few if any business or professional men serving as officers. The first Winnipeg branch executive, for example, included only two: John J. Dutton; who owned a bicycle shop; and John A. Barry, manager of the *Central Catholic and Northwest Review*. The rest of the executive was comprised of Patrick J. Henry (accountant), R.F. Hinds (warehouseman), P.J. Cantwell (store clerk), Richard Murphy (shipper) and Patrick J. Murphy (CPR storeman).[93]

Class was thus a central element of Winnipeg Hibernian identity from the time the branch was founded, and remained important during the war years. In addition to standing for pan-national Catholic solidarity across linguistic lines against the attacks of their 'Anglicized' countrymen, Hibernians championed themselves as representatives of working- and middle-class Catholics against those who had forsaken Catholic and Irish principles in the pursuit of wealth and power. Articulated in the context of intensifying class conflict in Winnipeg during the war, this class dimension of Hibernian identity occasionally accompanied a broader critique of capitalism and the Allied war effort. Most prominent in this regard was Henry, who used class conflict as the basis of some of his most severe critiques of Canada's contribution. In 1917, a hostile correspondent to the *Northwest Review* accused Henry of having edited a radical labour newspaper in Bemidji, Minnesota, before his arrival in Winnipeg. Henry neither confirmed nor denied the charge, which cannot be independently substantiated, but his personal politics were vehemently anti-capitalist.[94] His series of articles carried in the *Northwest Review* in the summer of 1917 denounced conscription as a policy of fighting the war on the backs of the working class and expressed confidence that the supremacy of the capitalist classes was growing weaker by the day as the war continued. Henry also claimed that America's entry into the conflict on the side of the Allies simply reflected the influence of wealthy industrialists, and he denounced American President Woodrow Wilson as a despotic, authoritarian strongman intent on subjecting the United States to a reign of terror.[95]

The extent to which such anti-capitalist rhetoric made the Winnipeg branch unique among its Hibernian brethren is unclear. The North American Hibernian leadership had publicly disassociated the order from working-class militancy in the late 1870s after it was linked to the murder of over a dozen mine owners and foremen in the anthracite mining regions of western Pennsylvania.[96] As Kerby Miller notes, while the leadership of the Hibernians was predominantly middle class, the presence of a significant proletarian element in its membership forced the order to address working-class issues. These concerns, however, had to be reconciled with the Catholic church's opposition to socialist and communist political movements, channeling criticism of capitalism away from any endorsement of radical political solutions. Thus, for example, speakers at the 1912 national Hibernian convention in Chicago simultaneously denounced socialism and the "selfish greed and intolerable industrial conditions" of early twentieth-century capitalism.[97] The available evidence suggests that the Winnipeg Hibernians followed this balanced approach of denouncing both the excesses of capitalism and socialist or other radical political solutions. For example, while Patrick J. Henry wrote fiery condemnations of capitalism during the war years, he refused to endorse the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919 in his capacity as editor of the *Northwest Review*. Similarly, despite the fact that the Winnipeg Hibernians were led by trade-union activist Henry Carr in 1919, the branch offered no support, rhetorical or otherwise, to the strikers.[98] The scholarship on the Hibernians elsewhere in Canada makes little mention of the class dynamics of Hibernian membership and identity, so the extent to which other Canadian branches fused class with their vision of Irish nationality cannot be evaluated. At the very least, the Winnipeg branch conformed to the pattern established by the North American leadership already in the 1870s. Articulated in the context of intensified class conflict during the war years, the Winnipeg Hibernian vision of respectable Irishness had strong class overtones.

While nationalists dominated Irish associational culture in the Prairie West during this period, another trend emerged among many prominent Irish Catholics who had previously disassociated themselves from Irish nationalism. This trend appears to parallel that detected by McGowan in his study of Irish Catholics in wartime Toronto. McGowan contends that the events of Easter 1916 stimulated a backlash against British policy in Ireland that paved the way for the city's Irish Catholics to reconcile support for Irish Home Rule or independence with loyalty to Canada, Britain and empire. Pointing to the fact that Irish Catholics focused their criticism on Prime Minister David Lloyd George rather than on the British monarchy or public, McGowan argues that Toronto's Irish Catholics, unwilling to support militant Irish nationalism, were willing to endorse greater autonomy for Ireland on the basis of the principles of freedom, justice and self-determination. From this perspective, Canada's war record gave it the right and the obligation to speak out against perceived injustice in any part of the British Empire.[99]

This backlash against British rule in Ireland among those who had previously offered little support for Home Rule was echoed in western Canada in the latter stages of the Great War, and continued on into the postwar period and the Irish War of Independence as prominent Irish Catholics, some of whom had taken no part in early twentieth-century Irish associational activity, mobilized to support Irish Home Rule. In March 1917, for example, a meeting of sympathizers in Winnipeg was attended by the likes of Edward Cass, James McKenty and John K. Barrett, all members of the committee of so-called 'English-speaking Catholics' denounced so vehemently by Henry as having abandoned their Irish identity. As with the Irish Catholics described by McGowan, these men's support for Home Rule had little to do with sentimentality or continued links with the homeland, and the resulting resolution was framed in terms of Canada's responsibility as an autonomous part of the British Empire:

> As Canada has taken part in the present war on the ground that 'when one portion of the empire is at war it is all at war;' so too, when one part of the empire – as is the case in Ireland – is unhappily governed in opposition to the will of the great majority of its people, it is the duty of every part of this empire to take active steps to see that justice is done.

James McKenty, responsible for forwarding the resolution in favour of Home Rule, followed up with a speech affirming that Canada and the other dominions, through their contributions to the war effort, had "acquired the right to have a voice in the settlement of any injustice within the empire."[100] Irish Catholics in Saskatchewan also rallied behind Home Rule in the latter stages of the Great War, and the Winnipeg resolution was subsequently passed in Regina and Moose Jaw. Speakers at the Regina event were careful to stress that their support for Home Rule was not an expression of anti-British sentiment, but rather an advancement of Ireland's claims on the basis of Allied war aims.[101] Similar sentiments were expressed at the 1918 St. Patrick's Day banquet in Regina. Though the Irishmen's Association of Regina had been one of the few prewar Irish Canadian societies to survive, St. Patrick's Day events in the city in both 1917 and 1918 were hosted by the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire to raise money for the war effort, and it was under their auspices that in 1918 Rev. Father George Daly delivered a speech defending Ireland's struggle for Home Rule. According to Daly, the events of Easter 1916 were rooted not in disloyalty but in the inherent strength of Irish nationalism. As "one of the brightest jewels in the British diadem," Ireland had no serious desire to cut all ties with Britain but instead sought autonomy as a self-governing state within the British Empire.[102] Home Rule was thus re-conceptualized as a measure that strengthened rather than weakened the empire and therefore deserved Canadian support.

Crucially, this newfound and broadly based enthusiasm for Irish Home Rule on the part of non-nationalist Irish Catholics paved the way for cooperation with the Hibernians, who were also active in the last two years of the war organizing protests demanding full autonomy and diplomatic recognition for Ireland. By early 1917, the Winnipeg Hibernians had passed a resolution demanding that Ireland be given a seat at the postwar peace settlement and were also attempting to rally sympathetic Irish Protestants to the cause of Home Rule.[103] In late 1918, the branch joined with the United Irish League, a more natural ally, to host a meeting to pressure the Canadian government into supporting Home Rule at the upcoming peace conference. One of the most prominent speakers was Edward Cass, who delivered a "glowing tribute to the purity of motives which influenced the British Empire to throw her full strength into the struggle against Prussian domination." The gathering passed a resolution supporting Ireland's claim to Home Rule on the basis of the rights of small nations, the principle upon which Britain had entered the war.[104]

Thus, by 1918, a rather unlikely alliance had been formed between Irish nationalists and non-nationalist Irish Catholics who had previously distanced themselves from Home Rule. Ironically, it was the very adoption of an Anglo-Canadian identity, so distasteful to the Winnipeg Hibernians, which mobilized many prominent Irish Catholics to see Home Rule as a logical measure consistent with the values that Canada had helped to defend in the Great War. The cause of Irish freedom, purged of its automatic association with disloyalty, could thus accommodate both nationalist and non-nationalist interpretations of its meaning. Winnipeg's Irish Catholics, and a small number of sympathetic Irish Protestants involved with the United Irish League, were temporarily united in pursuit of a common objective, setting the stage for a postwar flurry of renewed society activity that combined traditional elements of Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian associational culture.

Irish Associational Culture in Western Canada, 1919-30

Irish society activity in western Canada now entered a dynamic period of growth that lasted through the 1920s. Though somewhat blurred by the common ground reached on Home Rule, the traditional distinction between Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian associational culture remains useful, as renewed activity built upon established foundations and patterns. As the Great War yielded to the Irish War of Independence (1919-22), Irish nationalists remained ascendant in the region, spearheading new associations that continued to agitate for Home Rule, and at times launched public and often bitter condemnations of British policy in Ireland. Irish

Catholics remained central to this nationalist activity, though some sympathetic Protestant nationalists such as Samuel Jordan and Lindsay Crawford played important roles in the movement as well. For the most part, however, these new societies presented themselves as moderate, welcoming anyone willing to endorse Home Rule in an effort to capitalize on widespread public sympathy for the movement.

The first of two organizations that western Canadian nationalists introduced after the Great War was the Friends of Irish Freedom, which had strong roots in militant Irish American nationalism. It was established at the 1916 Irish Race Convention in New York, sponsored by the Clan na Gael, a secret society with direct ties to the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Dublin, formed in New York in the 1870s. The Friends of Irish Freedom openly embraced the revolutionary nationalism of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and had been unrelenting in condemning Britain after Easter 1916, but it was forced to moderate its politics once the United States entered the war, fearing accusations of disloyalty. The Friends of Irish Freedom continued to rally support for Irish independence, but did so on the basis of Allied war aims and the principle of self-determination for small nations. By 1919, it had over 275,000 members by 1919 and offered full support to Sinn Fein and the republican parliament, the Dáil Éireann.[105] The Winnipeg branch was formed in April 1920, with two of the city's most prominent Irish nationalists, Patrick J. Henry and Samuel Jordan, elected as president and vice-president, respectively. Richard Davis equated its founding with the launch of the most critical stage of support for Irish independence in Winnipeg's history,[106] and the organization in fact made an immediate impact, attracting four hundred members within a month. This success rested in part on its moderation. The Friends of Irish Freedom in Winnipeg promoted Ireland's case for independence and countered what it viewed as unfair and anti-Irish media coverage of events in Ireland without resorting to the language of militant nationalism, allowing members to reconcile their support for Irish Home Rule with loyalty to Canada and the British Empire.[107] For example, James McKenty delivered a speech at a Friends of Irish Freedom event that criticized British policy in Ireland, assuring the audience at the outset that he spoke "as a loyal Canadian."[108] James K. Barrett, who was not actively involved in Irish associational activity after the Great War, nonetheless condemned efforts by the Orange Order to stop Lindsay Crawford from speaking at a Friends of Irish Freedom event in Winnipeg as an attack on free speech.[109]

The second organization introduced was the Self-Determination for Ireland League. Active in both the United States and Great Britain, it spread rapidly through Canada in 1920-21, largely through the work of Canadian president Lindsay Crawford and national organizer Katherine Hughes, both of whom had emerged during the war years as harsh critics of British policy in Ireland. Crawford, a Protestant immigrant from Lisburn, County Antrim, and the wartime editor of the *Statesman*, a Toronto newspaper highly critical of British policy in Ireland after Easter 1916, was involved with the Friends of Irish Freedom in New York prior to its arrival in Canada. Hughes, who worked in Edmonton as the private secretary to the premier of Alberta prior to the war, had become by 1917 one of the most outspoken Canadian advocates of Irish independence. In addition to delivering speeches and penning newspaper opinion pieces on the Irish national question, she wrote a book (*Ireland*) so scathing of Britain that it had the distinction of being the only book about the Irish national question banned by Canadian censorship authorities during the Great War.[110]

Both Crawford and Hughes toured western Canada extensively in 1920-21 to rally support for their case and to establish branches of the Self-Determination for Ireland League. By August 1920, membership in the Winnipeg branch exceeded seven hundred, and many more had joined branches in Regina (182), Saskatoon (200), Calgary (289), Edmonton (278) and Vancouver (490).[111] The league also made a sustained effort to reach Irish sympathizers in smaller communities in the rural West, establishing over a dozen branches outside of major urban centres. In 1921, for example, Crawford himself delivered speeches to members in Humbolt and Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan.[112] As the league grew through 1920-21, it supplanted existing Irish nationalist organizations, absorbing the now redundant Friends of Irish Freedom in the summer of 1920, and accepting the Ancient Order of Hibernians as an affiliated society. The Hibernians, however, continued to maintain an independent public presence, hosting St. Patrick's Day events in Winnipeg where speakers lamented the "woeful condition of affairs" in Ireland, which was "undergoing her martyrdom" and "suffering under the tyranny of an army of occupation."[113]

In addition to incorporating as many existing Irish nationalist associations as possible, the Self-Determination for Ireland League sought to broaden its appeal by forging links with other allies, including labour groups and French Canadians. Representatives of both were invited to its first convention, where the league placed itself on record as being opposed to any further erosion of Francophone language rights in Canada.[114] Further, at one of the first meetings of the league's national council, the organization's leaders discussed the "urgent need" to print and distribute literature in the French as soon as finances permitted.[115] Efforts to appeal to French Canadians had an almost immediate tangible impact; among the branches organized during the first wave of activity in Manitoba, the St. Jean-Baptiste branch in St. Boniface had a membership of seventy comprised entirely of Francophones.[116] More significantly, labour and French Canadian groups offered venues for Self-Determination for Ireland League meetings and speeches, as Crawford's cross-country speaking tour ran into organized resistance from groups such as the Sons of England, the Great War Veterans' Association, and especially the Orange Order. The Orange Order took a strong interest in the political situation in Ireland, passing resolutions declaring its staunch support for Ulster and complete opposition to Home Rule. In 1921, the Grand Orange Lodge of Saskatchewan specifically noted the need to watch and counter the anti-British agitation of Crawford and the Self-Determination for Ireland League.[117] Orangemen threatened outright violence prior to his appearance in Humbolt, vowing to "set an example to the rest of Western Canada" by breaking up the meeting with a show of force and burning the hall to the ground.[118] The threat was not carried out, but anti-league campaigns bore fruit in Winnipeg and Regina, where the Orange Order successfully lobbied the civic authorities to ban Crawford from speaking at their respective city halls. Crawford ended up speaking in both cities at alternative venues, a labour hall in Regina and the Provencher school hall in St. Boniface. League rallies were also held at facilities offered by labour and Francophone groups in Calgary, Gravelbourg and Humbolt. Conscious of the importance of this support, league events addressed Francophone concerns. For example, at a speech delivered at the St. Jean-Baptiste Hall in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, Crawford denounced the Canadian government's "policy of Anglicization" and declared that the "French race in Canada" deserved the "amplest freedom of expression through its own particular tongue and culture."[119] Overall, this broad alliance outside the Irish community was critical to the success of the organization across western Canada.[120]

The opposition from particular groups aside, the expansion of the Self-Determination for Ireland League on a scale unprecedented for Irish nationalist societies in the Prairie West points to the widespread acceptability and popularity of Irish independence after the war. While led by individuals with a strong pedigree in militant nationalism, the new organization was careful to appear publicly as moderate in its approach to the Irish question, advertising itself as open to everyone who upheld Ireland's right to self-determination. The league officially defined its aim as simply "to secure organized support for the right of the people of Ireland to choose freely, without coercion or dictation from outside, their own governmental institutions and their political relationship with other states and peoples."[121] As the editor of the *Northwest Review*, Henry not only assured readers that lending support to Home Rule required nothing "that in any way compromises… loyalty to the Canadian flag," but also insisted that the cause deserved the backing of everyone "who breathes the free air of the Canadian West."[122] Such an agenda did not automatically call for the severance of the imperial tie, rendering the Self-Determination for Ireland League acceptable to a much larger group of people as public sympathy turned in favour of Ireland in the immediate postwar period.

While moderation was the key to its rapid expansion and early success, occasional rhetoric uncompromising in its condemnation of British rule in Ireland left the Self-Determination for Ireland League open to accusations of disloyalty. In September 1920, for example, the Winnipeg branch sent a message to the British government outlining its disgust over the tactics employed in Ireland, while the league in Alberta declared that British actions were "putting a severe strain on the loyalty of thousands of…devoted Canadian subjects."[123] A speaker at a meeting of the Calgary branch characterized them as base hypocrisy, and an exercise in the type of brutal imperialism against which Britain had just spent five years fighting.[124] Despite the often severe language of these condemnations, however, the manner in which they were framed points clearly to the growing fusion of Irish nationalist and Irish Canadian imperatives in postwar associational culture. British policy in Ireland might be described as a "reign of terror" and a "military crucifixion," but Self-Determination for Ireland League members objected to that policy first and foremost as loyal Canadians voicing their concern during the most pressing crisis in postwar imperial affairs.[125] Brought to new heights by current events in the homeland, Irish nationalist associational culture could not long outlast the achievement of Irish independence. In December 1921, the Self-Determination for Ireland League suspended its operations, declaring victory in the long struggle for Irish independence.[126]

Rather than representing the penultimate stage of Irish assimilation into the Anglo-Canadian mainstream, postwar Irish associational culture survived in the Prairie West, with new societies emerged in urban centres between 1922 and 1930.

They included the Daughters of Erin (Calgary, 1922), the Irish Canadian Association (Winnipeg, 1922), the United Irish Societies (Winnipeg, 1924), the St. Patrick's Societies of Calgary (1922) and Edmonton (1927), and the Sons and Daughters of Erin (Regina, 1926). With their emphasis on western Canada and celebration of the contributions of Irishmen to region and nation building, these societies represented a strong resurgence of Irish Canadian associational culture, which had largely lain dormant in the region since the prewar years. In the case of the Edmonton St. Patrick's Society, there was a direct connection with the prewar years, as the new society was launched by several former members of the Edmonton Irish Association; the constitution of the new body likewise mirrored that of its predecessor.[127] Also, like prewar Irish Canadian associational culture, there was a strong emphasis on the contributions of the Irish to western Canada, now including recent service in the Great War, as well as the economic progress of the region and the mandate to assist new immigrants in adjusting to life in Canada.[128]

One of the most revealing differences between Irish Canadian associational culture in its pre- and postwar manifestations revolved around the issue of Irish folk culture. Prior to 1914, public events and celebrations hosted by Irish Canadian societies were relatively formal affairs with little display or celebration of traditional Irish culture. By contrast, Irish Canadian society events and even the overall associational structure in the 1920s strongly promoted Irish folk culture. The St. Patrick's Society of Calgary, for example, included four divisions – social and political study, choral, orchestral and crochet/embroidery/lace making – and promoted the education and learning of Irish crafts.[129] Events hosted in Edmonton and Regina featured Irish songs and displays of step-dancing in national costume.[130] The most striking example of this trend came in Calgary in 1922 when the Daughters of Erin staged a *Ceilidh*, described by the local *Herald* as a "new and mysterious thing" to many in attendance. It featured what was described as a typical Irish peasant home, complete with turf fire, spinning wheel, furniture, women wearing traditional peasant costumes and a "tramp fiddler," and ended with a short performance, complete with Gaelic song.[131]

The Irish associational focus on folk culture in the 1920s was in part a product of the emergence of the Irish Free State. Though the Hibernians and other nationalists had not specifically promoted handicrafts and cottage industries, the promotion of Gaelic culture, including song and dance, had been in the prewar years an explicitly political act linked to the promotion of Irish nationalism and, as such, anathema to Irish Canadian societies seeking the integration of the Irish into western Canada. With the national question resolved, however, Irishness was safely depoliticized, making the celebration of traditional aspects of Gaelic culture acceptable. Promotion of Irish folk culture was thus a safe and depoliticized way to celebrate Irish nation-building and the emergence of a newly independent Irish Free State.

Rather than representing a barrier to assimilation, or even an uncomfortable reminder of peasant origins for a group seeking to promote itself in the development of the Prairie West, apolitical elements of Irish peasant culture like singing, dancing and handicrafts could safely be celebrated as part of a larger western Canadian culture. Thus, the Irish Canadian Association in Winnipeg could promote "clean

Canadian sports" alongside "Ancient Irish Athletic games," and a "literary club which shall cultivate Canadian literature on broad Celtic ideals and inculcated with Gaelic culture."[132] Colonel Drummond of the Calgary St. Andrew's Society, speaking at its St. Patrick's Society banquet in 1923, expressed this new sentiment well:

> There was not only a place but a necessity in the social and cultural life of this country, for National Societies such as St. Patrick's. In learning the traditions and culture of their homeland and in bringing the best thoughts obtainable from these sources and injecting them into the social and cultural life of Canada was performing a real service and fully justified their existence and encouragement.[133]

With Irishness safely depoliticized by the 1920s, Irish Canadian associations were free to celebrate Irish culture and tradition. No longer a barrier to full integration into Canadian life, celebration of Irishness now contributed to the western Canadian mosaic.

Conclusion

Irish associational culture underwent a remarkable evolution between 1905 and 1930, marked at once by continuity and discontinuity from the previous three decades. With their gaze fixed firmly on Irish contributions to western Canadian development, the Irish Canadian societies established in the region's major urban centres were in many respects the heirs to the non-sectarian societies of late nineteenth-century Winnipeg. Like their Winnipeg predecessors, the Irish Canadian societies formed during the prewar wave of associational activity across the Prairie West were eager to avoid potentially divisive debates over the politics of the Irish homeland, lending vague support at best to the campaign for Home Rule. The sympathetic response of Irish Canadians to events in Ireland during the Great War, however, revealed the extent to which Irish Canadian identity had evolved and grown in confidence. While the Irish in Winnipeg had been quick to distance themselves from Charles Parnell and his drive for Home Rule in the early 1890s, Irish Canadians increasingly embraced the cause of Irish independences after the brutal suppression of the Easter Uprising by British forces in 1916. In so doing, Irish Canadians spoke simultaneously as Irishmen, concerned about the deteriorating situation in their ancestral homeland, and as Canadians, asserting both their right and their responsibility to protest the unfair treatment of a fellow member of the British Empire.

There was little precedent for the strength of Irish nationalist sentiment in prewar western Canada, and more particularly Winnipeg. The outburst of support for militant Irish nationalism in the Manitoba capital during the Great War was a product of the convergence of multiple factors, including the sharp influx of Irish immigrants during the wheat boom years, the intensification of the crisis over Home Rule in Ireland, and emerging divisions within the province's Anglophone Catholic community. The harsh anti-British rhetoric voiced by the Irish nationalists was unpalatable to most Irish Canadians, and the vision of Irishness articulated by the Winnipeg Hibernians was never going to be embraced by a majority of the Irish in either the city or the region. Nonetheless, Irish nationalists kept the unresolved Irish national question at the forefront of their agenda, and found enough common ground with their Irish Canadian counterparts to lobby jointly in favour of Irish independence. With the establishment of the Irish Free State, Irish nationalist culture faded, though its commitment to preserve Gaelic culture was echoed, albeit in a completely depoliticized form, by the promotion of Celtic folk culture by the new

Irish societies of the 1920s. This depoliticized vision of Irishness, which stressed Gaelic culture alongside Canadian citizenship, would define Irish associational culture for the balance of the 1920s.

Notes

[1] *Edmonton Journal*, 19 March 1906.

[2] Mark G. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 153.

[3] Phillip Currie, "Reluctant Britons: The Toronto Irish, Home Rule, and the Great War," *Ontario History* 87, no.1 (March 1995): 69.

[4] *Northwest Review*, 25 April 1908; and *Daily Free Press*, 17 March 1911.

[5] *Northwest Review*, 16 November 1912, 13 December 1913.

[6] A notable addition to the historiography on Irish Protestant identity is William Jenkins, "Between the Lodge and the Meeting House: Mapping Irish Protestant Identities and Social Worlds in Late Victorian Toronto," *Social and Cultural Geography* 4, no. 1 (March 2003): 75-98. Jenkins' analysis, however, does not extend into the twentieth century.

[7] Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Publishing Company, 1908).

[8] Norman Fergus Black, *History of Saskatchewan and the North West Territories* (Regina: Saskatchewan Historical Company, 1913), vol. II, 825; and Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg*.

[9] *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 18 March 1912.

[10] *Newtownards Chronicle*, 6 January 1912. McCullough is identified as a pallbearer in the *Newtownards Chronicle* article, while his status as former president of the Edmonton Irish Association was taken from the *Edmonton Journal*, 19 March 1910.

[11] A. Ross McCormack, "Networks among British Immigrants and Accommodation to Canadian Society: Winnipeg, 1900-1914," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 17, no. 34 (November 1984): 368-71.

[12] See for example *Edmonton Capital*, 17 January 1910.

[13] Colin D. Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers: Sport and the Making of Modern Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 32-33.

[14] Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg*.

[15] *Edmonton Capital*, 8 January 1910, 17 March 1910, 18 March 1910, 17 March 1911.

[16] *Northwest Review*, 13 June 1914, 4 July 1914, 8 May 1915.

[17] Paul Darby and David Hassan, "Locating Sport in the Study of the Irish Diaspora," *Sport in Society* 10, no. 3 (May 2007): 336.

[18] *Northwest Review*, 14 July 1914; K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland Since 1800: Conflict and Conformity*, 2nd Edition (Harlow: Longman, 1999), 142-43; and Richard Vincent Comerford, *Ireland: Inventing the Nation* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003), 222-24.

[19] Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg*.

[20] For the Toronto example, see Dennis P. Ryan and Kevin B. Wamsley, "The Fighting Irish of Toronto: Sport and Irish Catholic Identity at St. Michael's College, 1906-16," *Sport in Society* 10, no. 3 (May 2007): 495-513.

[21] Morris Mott, "One Solution to the Urban Crisis: Manly Sports and Winnipeggers, 1900-1914," *Urban History Review* 12, no. 2 (October 1983): 60.

[22] Morris Mott, "The British Protestant Pioneers and the Establishment of Manly Sports in Manitoba, 1870-1886," *Journal of Sport History* 7, no. 3 (Winter 1980): 28; and Carl Betke, "Sports Promotion in the Western Canadian City: The Example of Early Edmonton," *Urban History Review* 12, no. 2 (October 1983): 53.

[23] Donald Wetherell and Irene Kmet, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta, 1896-1945* (Regina: Canada Plains Research Center, 1990), 128-29; and Bill Kirwin, "A Colony Within a Colony: The Western Canada Baseball League of 1912," *Nine: A Journal of Baseball History and Social Policy Perspectives* 4, no.2 (Spring 1996): 285.

[24] John O'Dea, *History of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Ladies' Auxiliary*, vol. III (Philadelphia: Ancient Order of Hibernians, 1923), 1387.

[25] Alan O'Day and N.C. Fleming, *The Longman Handbook of Modern Irish History Since 1800* (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2005), 786-87.

[26] Richard Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*, vol. 1, ed. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988), 399.

[27] *Regina Leader*, 20 March 1907.

[28] *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 18 March 1910.

[29] *Daily Free Press,* 18 March 1911. For other examples, see *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 18 March 1908, 18 March 1909, 18 March 1911; *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1908; and *Regina Leader*, 19 March 1908.

[30] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1913; and Grant MacEwan, *He Kept Them Laughing When He Said Goodbye: The Life and times of Frontier Lawyer Paddy Nolan* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1987), vii, 4.

[31] *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 18 March 1901, 18 March 1910.

[32] *Winnipeg Tribune,* 18 March 1908; and *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1913.

[33] Names taken from the list of Irish Association Members taken from Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg* and cross-referenced with comprehensive list of elected municipal officials in Alan J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914*, (Montreal-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975), 287-92. Supplementary biographical information taken from Canadian Publicity Company, *Pioneers and Prominent People of Manitoba*, (Winnipeg: Bulman Brothers Ltd., 1925), 94, 207.

[34] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1908.

[35] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1913.

[36] *Regina Leader*, 18 March 1913.

[37] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1914.

[38] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1914.

[39] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1914.

[40] *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1911; *Regina Leader*, 18 March 1913; and *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1914.

[41] Margaret Ward, "Gender: Gendering the Irish Revolution," in *The Irish Revolution, 1913-1923*, ed. Joost Augusteijn (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 170.

[42] Jason Knirck, *Women of the Dáil: Gender, Republicanism and the Anglo-Irish Treaty* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2006), 30-31. See also Louise Ryan, "'Furies' and 'Die-Hards': Women and Irish Republicanism in the Early Twentieth Century," *Gender and History* 11, no. 2 (July 1999): 256-75.

[43] *Northwest Review*, 14 December 1912.

[44] Hasia R. Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 128.

[45] Report of Charles J. Foy, *Thirteenth Biennial Convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians of the Province of Ontario*, 10 August 1914, Charles Foy Fonds, F 1074, Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), Toronto.

[46] *Northwest Review*, 1 November 1913; and Alan O'Day, "Irish Diaspora Politics in Perspective: The United Irish League of Great Britain and America, 1900-1914," *Immigrants and Minorities* 18, nos. 2-3 (July 1999): 218.

[47] *Northwest Review*, 7 February to 28 March 1914.

[48] O'Dea, *History of the Ancient Order of Hibernians*, vol. III, 1167. For the promotion of the Irish history program in an American urban centre, see Timothy J. Meagher, "'Irish All the Time': Ethnic Consciousness Among the Irish in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1880-1905," *Journal of Social History* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1985): 284.

[49] *Northwest Review*, 28 April 1917 for the description of Tobin as the 'mother.' Tobin was the president of the Ladies' Auxiliary from 1909 through 1915, after which time she became president of the provincial Ladies' Auxiliary. For fundraising efforts devoted to the Irish History program, see *Northwest Review* 29 November 1913, 13 December 1913.

[50] *Northwest Review*, 18 April 1914, 25 September 1915.

[51] *Northwest Review*, 24 March 1917, 8 May 1920; and *Daily Free Press*, 19 March 1918, 18 March 1921.

[52] *Northwest Review*, 29 November 1913.

[53] *Regina Leader*, 17 March 1917; and *Saskatoon Phoenix*, 18 March 1909, 18 March 1910.

[54] *Regina Leader*, 19 March 1908; and *Calgary Albertan*, 18 March 1909.

[55] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1913.

[56] *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 March 1911, 18 March 1913.

[57] Mike Cronin, *A History of Ireland* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 178-85.

[58] *Northwest Review*, 18 August 1917.

[59] Robin B. Burns, "The Montreal Irish and the Great War," *Canadian Catholic Historical Studies* 52 (1985): 67-68.

[60] Terrence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Romanism, and Canadianism* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2002), 174.

[61] McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 251.

[62] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," 403.

[63] McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 153-55; and Burns, "The Montreal Irish and the Great War," 70.
[64] William Murray, recording secretary, Division No. 1 AOH, Vancouver, to Charles Foy, 26 October 1914; F.J. O'Connor, recording secretary, Division No. 1 AOH, Gananoque, Ontario, to Foy, 22 November 1914; Frank Hart, provincial president, AOH British Columbia, 24 November 1914; Frank Nea, Division No. 3 AOH, Smith Falls, Ontario, to Foy, 3 December 1914; Patrick Dowd, county secretary, Wentworth County Board AOH, Hamilton, 10 August 1915; J.H. Barry, AOH member and past president of the Fredericton Division, 2 October 1915; and Thomas Malloy, Regina, to Charles Foy, 9 February 1916. Foy's files also contain a report by William P. Grannan (president, Division No. 1 AOH, York County, New Brunswick) dated 8 November 1915 protesting the anti-British editorial stance of the *National Hibernian*.
[65] Thomas Molloy to Philip J. Sullivan, National Secretary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Thompsonville, Connecticut, 8 February 1916, Charles Foy Fonds, F 1074, Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), Toronto. The letter was written to Sullivan and a copy was forwarded to Foy.
[66] D.O. McDonald to C.J. Foy, 2 December 1914, Charles Foy Fonds, F 1074, AO, Toronto.
[67] *Northwest Review*, 28 April 1917, 13 October 1917, 1 June 1918.
[68] *Northwest Review*, 18 May 1918.
[69] *Northwest Review*, 10 June 1916.
[70] *Northwest Review*, 22 July 1916, 5 August 1917.
[71] McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 197-99.
[72] *Northwest Review*, 1 June 1918. See also 18 August 1917, 5 January 1918, 19 January 1918, 13 April 1918, 1 June 1918, 9 March 1918.
[73] *Northwest Review*, 9 September 1918.
[74] *Northwest Review*, 30 June 1917.
[75] Ibid., 19-20, 36-37; Huel, "The Irish French Conflict in Catholic Episcopal Nominations," 59-60.
[76] Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 188.
[77] Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 166-67; and Mark McGowan, "A Portion for the Vanquished: Roman Catholics and the Ukrainian Catholic Church," in *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*, ed. Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in association with the Ukrainian Canadian Central Committee, 1991), 225.
[78] *Northwest Review*, 3 January 1914.
[79] *Central Catholic and Northwest Review*, 25 April 1908; and *Northwest Review*, 3 January 1914, 25 April 1914.
[80] Jack Cecillon, "Turbulent Times in the Diocese of London: Bishop Fallon and the French-Language Controversy, 1910-18," *Ontario History* 87, no. 4 (December 1995): 370-71; and Joseph Levitt, *Henri Bourassa, Catholic Critic* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1976), 9.
[81] *Northwest Review*, 19 February 1916.
[82] *Northwest Review*, 18 March 1916.

[83] The group of eleven who petitioned Langevin in December 1906 and continued to lead the campaign included one individual born in Ireland (Edward Cass) and six others of Irish descent (John K. Barrett, James McKenty, Richard Driscoll, Thomas D. Deegan, Nicholas Bawlf and John E. O'Conner).

[84] *Northwest Review*, 16 September 1911, 25 May 1916, 28 December 1918.

[85] *Central Catholic and Northwest Review*, 6 March 1909.

[86] O'Dea, *History of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Ladies' Auxiliary*, vol. III, 1286-87, 1455; For prewar examples, see *Northwest Review*, 16 March 1912, 1 June 1912, 18 January 1913.

[87] *Northwest Review*, 6 March 1915, 31 March 1917. For a discussion of the evolution of the stage paddy character, see John J. Appel, "From Shanties to Lace Curtains: The Irish Image in *Puck*, 1876-1910," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no. 4 (October 1971): 365-75.

[88] *Northwest Review*, 17 February 1917.

[89] *Northwest Review*, 11 December 1915.

[90] Thomas J. Rowland, "Irish-American Catholics and the Quest For Respectability in the Coming of the Great War, 1900-1917," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 15, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 3-32.

[91] *Northwest Review*, 8 April 1916.

[92] See for example *Northwest Review*, 2 September 1911, 20 October 1917, 5 January 1918.

[93] Hibernian executive taken from Winnipeg Publishing Company, *The Clubs, Societies and Associations of Winnipeg*; job profiles taken from *Henderson's Directory of Winnipeg*, 1908 and 1909.

[94] *Northwest Review*, 8 September 1917, 28 December 1918.

[95] *Northwest Review*, 30 June 1917, 14 July 1917, 18 August 1917, 25 August 1917.

[96] Kevin Kenny, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 278.

[97] Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 534.

[98] *Northwest Review*, 28 December 1918; and Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba, 1870-1922," 404.

[99] McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 199-201.

[100] *Northwest Review*, 17 March 1917.

[101] *Northwest Review*, 17 March 1917, 24 March 1917; and *Regina Leader*, 16 March 1917.

[102] *Regina Leader*, 16 March 1918.

[103] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba," 402. The exact date of the resolution is unclear: Davis does not give a specific date, but based on his chronology, it must have been passed between December 1916 and March 1917; *Northwest Review*, 23 March 1918.

[104] *Northwest Review*, 19 October 1918.

[105] Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish: A History* (New York: Longman, 2000), 196-7; and Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 542-43.

[106] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba," 404; and *Northwest Review*, 17 April 1920, 15 May 1920.

[107] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba," 404; and *Northwest Review*, 14 February 1920.

[108] *Northwest Review*, 15 May 1920.

[109] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba," 405.

[110] John W. Boyle, "A Fenian Protestant in Canada: Robert Lindsay Crawford, 1910-22," *Canadian Historical Review* 52:2 (June 1971): 173; Pádraig Ó Siadhail, "Katherine Hughes, Irish Political Activist," in *Edmonton: The Life of a City*, ed. Bob Hesketh and Frances Swyripa (Edmonton: NeWest Publishers Limited, 1995), 82-3; *Northwest Review* 27 January 1917; and Chief Press Censor Ernest J. Chambers to Secretary of State, 15 March 1918, Chief Press Censor of Canada Records, RG 6, E, vol. 594, file 269-74, Library and Archives of Canada (hereafter LAC), Ottawa. See also Katherine Hughes, *Ireland* (Kingston: Canadian Freeman, 1917).

[111] *Northwest Review*, 28 August 1920. Final membership numbers on the League in Western Canada are not available, though coverage in the *Northwest Review* indicates that it numbered in the thousands by 1921.

[112] *Northwest Review*, 28 August 1920, 25 December 1920, 16 April 1921, 14 May 1921.

[113] Davis, "Irish Nationalism in Manitoba," 405-06; and *Daily Free Press*, 18 March 1920, 18 March 1921.

[114] Boyle, "A Fenian Protestant in Canada," 173.

[115] *Minutes of a Meeting of the National Council of the Self-Determination for Ireland League of Canada and Newfoundland*, Ottawa, 17 February 1920, Charles Foy Fonds, F 1074, AO, Toronto.

[116] *Northwest Review*, 2 October 1920.

[117] *Report of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Right Worshipful Grand Orange Lodge of Saskatchewan* (1921), Orange Lodge of Saskatchewan Fonds, F 638, Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon.

[118] *Northwest Review*, 16 April 1921, 23 April 1921, 30 April 1921.

[119] *Northwest Review*, 14 May 1921.

[120] *Northwest Review*, 2 October 1920, 26 February 1921, 9 April 1921, 23 April 1921, 14 May 1921, 12 November 1921.

[121] *Northwest Review*, 19 June 1920.

[122] *Northwest Review*, 7 February 1920, 15 January 1921.

[123] *Northwest Review*, 18 September 1920, 28 September 1920.

[124] *Northwest Review*, 6 November 1920.

[125] *Northwest Review*, 18 September 1920, 28 September 1920.

[126] *Northwest Review*, 10 December 1921, 17 December 1921.

[127] *Edmonton Journal*, 18 March 1927.

[128] *Northwest Review*, 11 March 1922, 31 March 1923; *Calgary Herald*, 18 March 1924; and *Calgary Albertan*, 18 March 1924, 18 March 1925.

[129] *Northwest Review*, 8 July 1922, 23 June 1923.

[130] *Regina Leader*, 19 March 1928, 19 March 1929; and *Edmonton Journal*, 18 March 1928.

[131] *Calgary Herald*, 20 March 1922.
[132] *Northwest Review*, 11 March 1922.
[133] *Northwest Review*, 31 March 1923.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the experience of the Irish in western Canada from the 1870s through the early 1930s. It has analyzed Irish immigration, migration and settlement in both rural and urban environments and discussed the evolution of Irish identity as expressed through Irish societies across the region. While acknowledging that Irishness was never monolithic, this thesis has argued that a regional variant of Irish identity emerged that rooted the Irish firmly in the Prairie West. Irish associations promoting this regional identity emphasized the leading role taken by the Irish in western Canadian affairs rather than celebrating ties to a distant homeland, though other variants of Irish identity also emerged that articulated narrower visions of Irishness along sectarian and diasporic lines. Patterns of immigration and migration, which resulted in the steady growth of the Prairie Irish population in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, set the stage for Irish society activity across the region, even as such activity was in decline elsewhere in Canada.

The Irish first established a presence in the Prairie West with the advance of agricultural settlement in the 1870s. Irish migrants from central and eastern Canada, and especially Ontario, moved west in sizeable numbers in response to the lure of cheap land in Manitoba and the North-West Territories. This migration was dominated by Canadian-born Irish pushed out of Ontario by land shortages and a depressed agricultural economy, as western settlement offered the Irish opportunities unavailable in their home province. For other Irish farmers who had first crossed the Atlantic in the early nineteenth century, the movement west represented a second stage of agricultural settlement after decades of residence in British North America.

Irish migrants, both intergenerational and immigrant, located overwhelmingly in rural locations and contributed to the establishment of an Anglo-Canadian, and overwhelmingly Protestant, culture in rural western Canada.

The Prairie West was also a frontier for immigration in the late nineteenth century, and the Dominion government actively promoted western Canada in Ireland as a promising destination for potential emigrants. Canadian efforts to attract Irish immigrants were challenged by anti-emigration activists, who countered the Dominion's efforts by portraying western Canada as an arctic wilderness unsuitable for habitation. More critically, however, Canadian efforts to attract an increased share of the post-Famine exodus from Ireland went strongly against the grain of existing emigration patterns, and the vast majority of transatlantic emigrants continued to choose the United States over Canada. Further, the inability of the Canadian government to reach an agreement with Great Britain on the issue of Irish colonization limited Canada's potential as a destination for large-scale immigration. The Prairie West did offer some wealthy Irish farmers opportunities for settlement and agricultural investment, but the end result of Canada's promotional work was disappointing. Irish immigration thus played only a minor role in late nineteenth-century Prairie settlement, and many of the region's Irish-born residents came as migrants rather than recently arrived immigrants.

Comprised predominantly of intergenerational migrants, the Irish in the rural West were largely invisible, with little to distinguish them from other Anglophone ethnic groups. A more discernable Irish presence, however, emerged in Winnipeg, as both Catholics and Protestants established Irish societies, beginning with the St.

Patrick's Society of Manitoba in 1874. These associations reflected the goals and ambitions of the city's Irish, as well as the growth of Winnipeg as the regional metropolis. While international influences such as the Home Rule movement and the Boer War could at times decisively shape Irish associational activity, the dominant identity articulated by Winnipeg's Irish societies was distinctly regional. While the St. Patrick's Society of Manitoba and the Irish Protestant Benevolent Association chose to articulate Irishness along sectarian lines, it was the non-sectarian Irishness of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, with its emphasis on national unity, Canadian citizenship and Irish contributions to regional development, that endured as the most important variant of associational culture in the Prairie West.

The most dynamic period of Irish associational activity in the history of western Canada came with the dramatic growth of the region's Irish population during the wheat boom. Irish immigrants and migrants, including a sizeable number of continental migrants, settled in the Prairie region in unprecedented numbers. The Irish presence in western Canada continued to be predominantly rural, but Irish settlement in urban centres paved the way for the emergence of Irish associational activity in major western Canadian cities between 1907 and 1914, with Winnipeg remaining the most vibrant centre of Irish associational culture. The prosperity and optimism of the wheat boom years were clearly reflected in Irish Canadian associational culture, which celebrated the status of the Prairie West as the greatest settlement frontier of nation and empire. The growth of Irish Canadian societies in the prewar years was also a distinctly regional phenomenon, contrasting sharply with the late nineteenth-century decline of such activity elsewhere in Canada, most notably

Toronto. The extensive participation of Ontario-born Irish in Prairie associational activity, however, calls into question the extent to which the group was indeed fully assimilated in Ontario by the early twentieth century.

It was also during the prewar wheat boom that the nationalist variant of Irish associational culture emerged in western Canada, and especially Winnipeg. While only a small minority of Prairie Irish joined organizations with an explicitly nationalist agenda, the spread of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the United Irish League brought the campaign for Irish Home Rule to the region. Nationalist agitation kept the Irish national question at the forefront of public consciousness during the first years of the Great War until broad public opinion turned in favour of Home Rule after the events of Easter 1916, at which time Irish nationalists were able to win the support and cooperation of their non-nationalist counterparts. This collaboration was in part a victory for Irish nationalists, but also reflected the continued influence of Irish Canadian identity. Broadly based support for Irish Home Rule was only possible once it had been reconciled with Canadian citizenship and British loyalty. The Irish in western Canada who endorsed Home Rule between 1916 and 1922 demonstrated a clear interest in Irish affairs, but most did so first and foremost as Canadians, asserting their right to participate in the most urgent devate in imperial affairs. Prairie Irish associational interest in the politics of the homeland ceased with the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, and organizations established to agitate for Home Rule disbanded.

The years after 1922 saw a renewal of Irish immigration to western Canada, as political and economic crisis drove thousands out of Ireland, though the number of

Irish arriving in the region would never again approach the levels reached during the wheat boom years. While the Prairie Irish continued to be dominated by the intergenerational group, the majority of this population was very likely Prairie-born rather than migrant by the 1920s. Irish associational culture endured in the form of a new wave of society activity that drew heavily on the foundation of Irish Canadian associational culture, celebrating Canadian citizenship and Irish contributions to regional development. At the same time, this new associational activity embraced Gaelic culture, now divorced from any unwelcome connection with militant Irish nationalism.

From the 1870s through the early 1930s, the Irish presence in western Canada had expanded dramatically, typically mirroring broader demographic and settlement trends. The Irish were in many ways prototypical Anglo-Canadian Prairie settlers, drawn to the region by the same motives that brought Scottish and English migrants and immigrants in huge numbers. And like the English and Scottish, the overwhelming majority of Irish embraced Britishness and Canadian citizenship as critical elements of their identity. Yet at the same time, the resilience of Irish associational activity in western Canada, which took root in Winnipeg less than five years after the Prairie West was opened for agricultural settlement and continued in various forms for six decades, clearly demonstrates that many Irish were not content to simply submerge their Irish identity completely within a broad Anglo-Canadian collective. The Prairie Irish reconciled and fused their Irishness with broader identities, including imperialism, Canadianism and most critically regional citizenship, illustrating both the flexibility and durability of Irishness in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century western Canada.

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